

Mapping the Daoist Body

Part One

The *Neijing tu* in History^{*}

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Abstract

This article examines the history and content of the *Neijing tu* 內經圖 (Diagram of Internal Pathways), a late nineteenth-century stele currently housed in Baiyun guan 白雲觀 (White Cloud Monastery; Beijing). The diagram is one of the most well-known illustrations of the Daoist body, though its historical provenance has not been sufficiently documented to date.

The present article provides a more complete account of its context of production and dissemination, namely, within the context of Baiyun guan, the late imperial Longmen 龍門 (Dragon Gate) lineage of the Quanzhen 全真 (Complete Perfection) monastic order, and elite imperial court culture. I then turn to a systematic study of its contents and the Daoist methods expressed in its contours. Within its topographical landscape, one finds a specific vision of the Daoist body, a body actualized through Daoist alchemical

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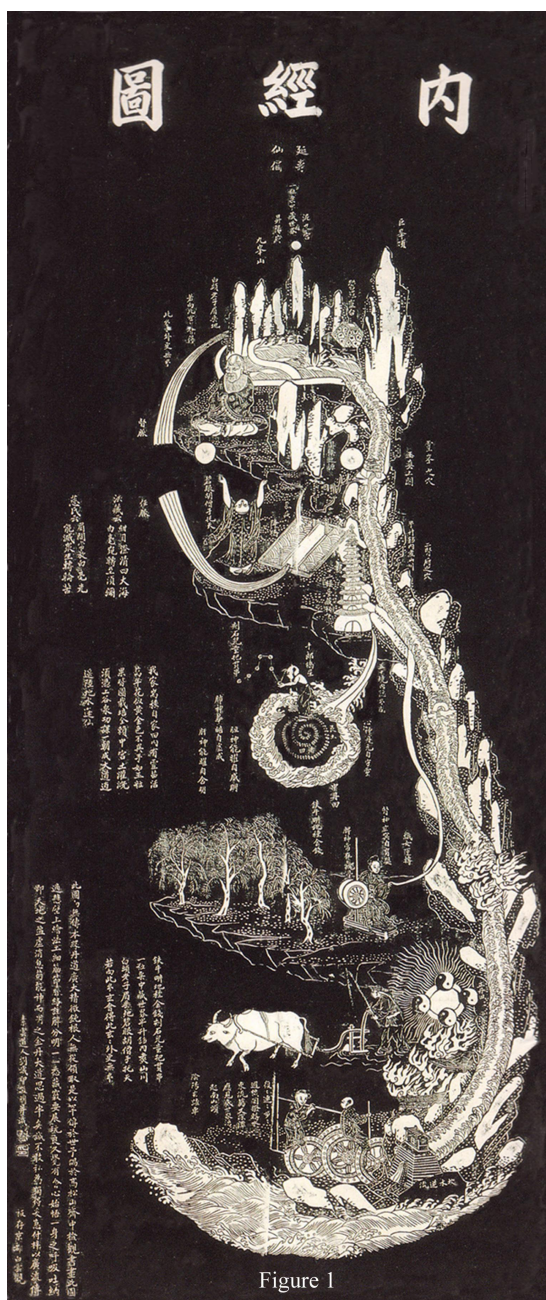
praxis. As such, the *Neijing tu* and its various rubbings were more than likely intended as visual aids for Daoist religious training.

For readability, the article has been divided into two parts. The current section discusses the diagram's historical and terminological dimensions. The second part, scheduled to be published in the next issue of the *Journal of Daoist Studies*, focuses on content and includes a complete bilingual translation with illustrations.

Throughout the history of the Daoist tradition, Daoists have been expert and extraordinary cartographers. Whether through textual descriptions or visual representations, Daoists have sought to map the patterns and constituents of both internal and external worlds. They have charted the cosmos through star diagrams, including the forms of the five planets and the twenty-eight lunar mansions. They have mapped the layers of the heavens, the subtle realms of the universe, and the stellar abodes inhabited by the Perfected (*zhenren* 真人). They have diagramed the mountain peaks of this terrestrial landscape and the hidden grotto-heavens (*dongtian* 洞天) branching out like veins through the earth. They have charted the geomantic contours and qualities of place. They have mapped the internal spirits associated with the various orbs¹ and the process by which one realizes the givenness of cosmological situatedness. They have diagramed the alchemical process of self-transformation and the subtle physiology of human aliveness.² In short, Daoists have mapped the universe in its various layers and mutual influences—a universe which is simultaneously cosmos, world, landscape, community, and self.

¹ On the translation of *zang* 藏/臟 as “orb” see Porkert 1974. Although *zang* has been translated in numerous ways (organ, viscera, depot, etc.), orb seems the best choice as it includes the larger process-oriented *qi* theory.

² Examples of these various maps may be found throughout the pages of Needham et al. 1983; Despeux 1994; 2000; Little 2000. On the importance of specific geographical locations in the Daoist tradition see, e.g., Naquin and Yu 1992; Verellen 1995; Hahn 1988; 2000; Qiao 2000.



The *Neijing tu* 內經圖 (Diagram of Internal Pathways; see Figure 1) is one such diagram.³ The *Neijing tu* is a map of the Daoist internal landscape and a storehouse of Daoist cultivation practices, specifically visualization and alchemical techniques. The diagram depicts the head and torso of the Daoist body as seen from the side and in seated meditation posture. It illustrates more commonly recognizable aspects of the human body in combination with Daoist subtle anatomy and physiology. The spinal column, framed on the right and connecting the lower torso with the cranial cavity, draws one's immediate attention. The conventional representation of the spinal column is supplemented by specifically Daoist realities: on closer examination one notices three temples within the

³ The rubbing in my personal collection was acquired at Baiyun guan in 2002. Like other modern rubbings from the extant stone stele, it lacks the *guangxu* 光緒 inscription in the upper right-hand corner (see Eichman 2000a), which is discussed below as a key to the history of the diagram. Of late, the *Neijing tu* has become a sort of logo for Daoist Studies in the West. It has appeared in numerous publications, with varying degrees of reflective consideration. For example, it has appeared on the cover of Thomas Cleary's *The Inner Teachings of Taoism*, in Livia Kohn's *The Taoist Experience* (Kohn 1993, 177), in John Lagerwey's *Taoist Ritual in Chinese Society and History* (Lagerwey 1987, 289), and in Schipper's *Le corps taoïste* (Schipper 1982, 143) without any explanation. The most detailed studies to date are Rousselle 1933; Sakade 1991; Wang 1991/92; and Eichman 2000a. Additional comments may be found in Chia 1995; Cohen 1997, 152-55; Despeux 1994, 44-48; 2000; Li 2003; Liu n.d.; Needham et al. 1983, 114-16; Schipper 1978, 356; Skar 2003. Rousselle and Wang provide fairly systematic accounts, with Wang translating much of the diagram, but from an art historical perspective. Both also provide some information on the relationship between a rubbing of the *Neijing tu* and an unidentified painting. Eichman's comments are included in the art catalogue *Taoism and the Arts of China*, and, like Needham and Despeux, are fairly general. Needham, Despeux and Skar also provide some insights into the historical and doctrinal relationship between various Daoist body maps, including the *Neijing tu*. Here it perhaps deserves mentioning that most of the discussions of Daoist body maps rely on and often closely follow Needham et al. 1983. Note also that the *Neijing tu* (and many of the original images) was not reproduced in the English translation of Schipper's *La corps taoïste*, where we find the following note: "See the image of the Inner Landscape on page 000, where the lower Cinnabar Field (*hsia tan-t'ien*) is represented by an irrigated rice field being tilled by a young body" (Schipper 1993, 235, n. 24).

spine, corresponding to the Three Passes (*sanguan* 三關) through which Daoist adepts engaging in the process of alchemical transformation endeavor to circulate qi. In addition, the three elixir fields (*san dantian* 三丹田)⁴—with the lower one corresponding to the ox (abdominal region), the middle to the Cowherd (heart region), and the upper to the old man (head region)—are clearly discernable. One also notes the head as a series of mountain peaks and the presence of bridges and pagodas inside the body. In addition, streams are flowing throughout the map (and throughout the body). These various details, as well as the textual and visual contours yet to be mentioned, reveal the *Neijing tu* as a detailed mapping of the Daoist body. It reveals the internal landscape discovered and actualized through Daoist cultivation, specifically within certain circles of late imperial Daoism and branches of Daoist internal alchemy (*neidan* 內丹),⁵ notably the Longmen 龍門 (Dragon Gate) branch of Quanzhen 全真 (Complete Perfection) at Baiyun guan 白雲觀 (White Cloud Monastery; Beijing) in the late nineteenth century. Although such historical qualifications must, perhaps, be made, in its textual content, visual representations, and praxis-based concerns, the *Neijing tu* finds clear precedents in both Song-Jin (tenth-thirteenth century) lineages of internal alchemy and late imperial internal alchemy.⁶ In addition, the diagram has retained a central place of importance within Daoist com-

⁴ "Elixir fields" (*dantian* 丹田), discussed in more detail below, are subtle, often "mystical," energetic locations in the body, which frequently include a non-spatial dimension (e.g., mystical cranial locations). They are places in which the body's physical and energetic aspects, the "ingredients" for the alchemical medicine and the foundation for immortality, are stored and transformed. The essential materials for elixir-formation are vital essence (*jing* 精) associated with the kidneys, *qi* 氣 associated with the lower abdomen, spirit (*shen* 神) associated with the heart and "brain," and bodily fluids (*jinye* 津液), which have a variety of associations. Some internal alchemy systems also place emphasis on the ethereal soul (*hun* 魂) and the corporeal soul (*po* 魄). For an attempt to map Daoist elixir-formation in terms of Chinese medical theory see Komjathy 2007, ch. 6.

⁵ For some insights into the history and practice of internal alchemy see Baldrian-Hussein 1983; Needham et al. 1983; Robinet 1989b; 1995; Pregadio and Skar 2000; Skar 2003; Komjathy 2007.

⁶ The exact lineage of internal alchemy documented in the *Neijing tu* awaits future research. While I make some suggestions, a complete study of late imperial *neidan* and Longmen may clarify these and related historical issues.

munities into the twenty-first century, a testament to the enduring power of its mapping of the Daoist body and Daoist religious praxis.⁷

In part one of this article, I discuss the historical background of the *Neijing tu* as well as the layers of meaning embedded in its title. In part two, which will appear in the next issue of the *Journal of Daoist Studies*, a detailed study of the graphic and textual components of the diagram is presented. I also draw attention to three specific Daoist cultivation methods illustrated in the *Neijing tu*, namely, praxis-oriented applications of classical Chinese medical views of the body; visualization methods which draw their inspiration from the *Huangting jing* 黃庭經 (Scripture on the Yellow Court; DZ 331; 332)⁸ and which find clear historical precedents in early Shangqing 上清 (Highest Clarity) Daoism; and the alchemical technique known as the Waterwheel (*heche* 河車) or Micro-cosmic Orbit (*xiao zhoutian* 小周天).

The primary focus of the present study is the textual and visual content of the diagram itself, especially as one depiction of the Daoist “alchemical” or “mystical body” (see Komjathy 2007) and as one map of Daoist religious praxis as undertaken in the late imperial period. The major contribution of this paper is, in turn, threefold. It provides the first complete translation of the *Neijing tu*, including bilingual renderings of the diagram as divided into three sections. Second, it supplies greater specificity than any previous study concerning the actual historical context in which the original stele was commissioned and in which the original version may have been produced. Finally, I argue for reading the *Neijing tu* as a map of Daoist cultivation as understood and undertaken in the context of late imperial Daoism and in the Longmen branch of Quanzhen, specifically at Baiyun guan during the late Qing dynasty (1644-1911). On the most basic level, the diagram is an aesthetically pow-

⁷ Some claims have also been made concerning the *Neijing tu* as part of “Chinese medical history.” See Fu et al. 1999; Li 2003. While purely medical explanations prove unsatisfactory in terms of the diagram’s content, the overlapping contours of “Buddhism,” “Daoism,” and “Chinese medicine” may give one pause at the reified nature of those categories. The *Neijing tu*, like contemporaneous sources, reveals a complex pattern of interaction, adaptation, and transformation of “traditions” in the late imperial period.

⁸ Daoist texts are cited according to Komjathy 2002, with numbers for the Ming-dynasty Daoist Canon paralleling Schipper’s system.

erful depiction of the human body, and thus of the aspiring Daoist adept's own psychosomatic possibility.⁹ On another level, it is the body as actualized through meditative praxis, and thus points towards two additional dimensions: seated meditation becomes represented as the normative and normalizing posture for human beings; and, like earlier mappings of Daoist cultivation, the *Neijing tu* was more than likely used (and continues to be used) as a visual aid for meditation.

Historical Contours

The received *Neijing tu* is a stone stele housed at Baiyun guan in Beijing. Baiyun guan is the seat of contemporary Quanzhen Daoism, the official state-sponsored Daoist monastic tradition in mainland China, and the headquarters of the Chinese Daoist Association (Zhongguo daojiao xiehui 中國道教協會).¹⁰ It is also the chief monastery of the Longmen branch of Quanzhen, traditionally said to have been established by Qiu Chuji 丘處機 (Changchun 長春 [Perpetual Spring]; 1148-1227), but historically traced to Wang Changyue 王常月 (Kunyang 崑陽 [Paradisiacal Yang]; 1622-1680) (Esposito 2000, 628; see also Esposito 1993; 2001).

The received *Neijing tu* stele is a reproduction of a late-nineteenth century engraving. According to the inscription in the upper right-hand corner of at least some rubbings of the *Neijing tu* (see Eichman 2000a), the engraving of the original stele occurred in the first third of the sixth lunar month in 1886 (*guangxu bingwu nian heyue shanghuan* 光緒丙戌年荷月上浣), that is, towards the end of the late imperial period and of the Manchu Qing dynasty (1644-1911). The *guangxu* 光緒 inscription only occurs in some extant rubbings, and this historical detail, from my perspective, provides an important clue into the history of the diagram now known as the *Neijing tu*. In contrast, the extant *Neijing tu* stone stele of Baiyun guan, similar reproductions distributed to various Daoist temples (e.g.,

⁹ In this respect, the *Neijing tu* is not simply an "artifact," a trace of some lost historical moment or a monument to disappearing tradition. It remains an enduring presence in various Daoist communities and in the lives of specific Daoists. Cf. Eichman 2000b: 231.

¹⁰ For information on Quanzhen Daoism see Yao 1980; Tsui 1991; Qing et al. 1996, vol. 3; *Journal of Chinese Religions* 29 (2001); Eskildsen 2004; Komjathy 2007. For a study of the history of Baiyun guan see Marsone 1999.

Baxian gong, Chongyang gong, Qingyang gong), and modern rubbings lack this inscription. This, in turn, points to an earlier engraving, regarding which its current status (extant or not), possible location, and original material (wood, stone or bronze) remain a mystery.

The original engraving was commissioned by a Longmen monk and court eunuch (*taijian* 太監) named Liu Chengyin 劉誠印 (d. 1894), whose Daoist name was Suyun 素雲 (Pure Cloud).¹¹ Liu Chengyin was born in Dongguang 東光 county, Zhili 直隸 province (present-day Hebei), an area known for its poverty and hence its steady supply of young boys who were often sold by their parents to be castrated and trained as eunuchs for the imperial household. Little else is known about Liu's early life and his career. As Liu Xun points out,

¹¹ The most readily available biographical information appears in a stele inscription written by Xiyou 禧祐, a Manchu bannerman, and entitled "Liu Suyun daoxing bei" 劉素雲道行碑 (Stele on the Daoist Activities of Liu Suyun; dat. 1886). It seems that this stele was originally located in the western front of the Nanji dian 南極殿 (Shrine of the Southern Polestar), which is now named Leizu dian 雷祖殿 (Shrine of the Patriarch of Thunder). Wang Chiping 王持平 (pers. comm.); author's field observations (cf. Goossaert 2007, 224). For reproductions see Koyanagi 1934, 158-59; Li 2003, 714. Other important, related steles include the "Suyun zhenren daoxing beiji" 素雲真人道行碑記 (dat. 1895), "Suyun zhenren Liu xianshi beiji" 素雲真人劉先師碑記 (dat. 1895), "Liu Suyun taming" 劉素雲塔銘 (dat. ca. 1900), and "Baiyun guan Changchun gonghui beiji" 白雲觀長春供會碑記 (dat. 1886). On these and contemporaneous steles see Goossaert 2007. Most of the present biographical information on Liu Chengyin comes from the first inscription and from Liu Xun's study (2004a) of a series of paintings honoring Bixia yuanjun 碧霞元君 (Primordial Goddess of Cerulean Mists), which had been commissioned by Gao Rentong 高仁峒 (1841-1907), twentieth-generation abbot of Baiyun guan (see also Liu 2004b). The relevant information on Liu Chengyin appears on pages 84-94. Liu's article also provides the interested reader with a fuller appreciation of the complex interaction among the Qing imperial elite, powerful Longmen clerics, and court eunuchs during the end of the Qing dynasty, with special attention to the late-nineteenth century Baiyun guan environs. See also Vincent Goossaert's *The Taoists of Peking* (2007), which provides a more complete picture of the religio-cultural context of Beijing during the late imperial and early modern periods. On Gao Rentong see especially pages 172-75; information of Liu Chengyin appears on pages 218-23.

Official Qing sources generally neglect the history of eunuchs like Liu whose profession and social class were widely stigmatized. Nonetheless, circumstantial evidence found in non-official sources attests to Liu's powerful influence and connections at Qing court, and to the immense personal wealth he garnered from these connections. (Liu 2004a, 85)

Liu Chengyin was a powerful court eunuch to Empress Dowager Cixi 慈禧 (1835-1908) and a generous patron of Baiyun guan.¹² He became one Cixi's most trusted chief eunuchs following the execution of An Dehai 安德海 (d. 1869). More germane to the present study, Liu Chengyin received formal Longmen ordination under Zhang Yuanxuan 張圓璿 (Gengyun 耕雲 [Tilling Clouds]; 1828-1887), one of the most famous Quanzhen monastic leaders of his era. This ordination ceremony occurred in 1871 and included several hundred ordainees, one of whom was Gao Rentong 高仁峒 (Shoushan 壽山 [Longevity Mountain]; 1841-1907),¹³ who would become the twentieth-generation abbot of Baiyun guan after the death of Abbot Meng Yongcai 孟永才 (d. 1881). As a Longmen monk at Baiyun guan, Liu Chengyin served as an altar attendant (*hutan huazhu* 護壇化主) (Min and Li 1994, 482); as a patron of Baiyun guan and court confidante, he was a generous donor to and advocate for the monastery.

¹² It seems that a major motivation for court eunuch interest in and support of Quanzhen Daoism centered on a popular imagining of Qiu Changchun. In circulation since at least the sixteenth century, though without historical support in terms of Qiu's actual life, this legend claimed that Qiu castrated himself in order to resist sexual favors bestowed on him by Chinggis Qan (Genghis Khan; ca. 1162-1227; r. 1206-1227), the Mongol ruler. Remembrance of Qiu's legendary self-castration became central during festivities surrounding his birthday. Occurring from the first day of the first moon through the nineteenth day of the first moon, these festivities culminated in the celebration of Qiu's birthday on the nineteenth day, which was popularly known as Yanjiu 燕九. See Liu 2004a, 88-91. On Qiu Changchun see Yao 1980; 1986; Zheng 1995; Zhao 1999.

¹³ Gao Rentong, as was traditionally the case for Daoist clerics, had a number of names, including Yuntong 雲峒, Tongyuan 峒元, Yunxi 雲溪, and Mingdong[tong] 明洞[峒]. Liu 2004a; Min and Li 1994, 825. The latter source also includes brief entries on Liu Chengyin (482) and Zhang Yuanxuan (586).

Between 1871 and 1890, he helped the monastery raise a total of some 44,000 taels of silver, more than half of which came from Liu himself. Most of the funds went to pay for ordination ceremonies, including the one that occurred in 1871, and the renovation and construction of monastic buildings. Liu Chengyin was also instrumental in funding the carving and erecting of several major stele inscriptions. Among these, he commissioned the engraving of the *Neijing tu*, which was erected at Baiyun guan in 1886. Later this stele was inlaid together with the *Xiuzhen tu* 修真圖 (Diagram for Cultivating Perfection) (see Despeux 1994; Skar 2000), another, more complex diagram on internal alchemy, on a wall in the rear garden of the monastery compound in 1890. The engraving of the *Xiuzhen tu* stele, like that of the *Neijing tu*, was commissioned by Liu. As is evidenced from such patronage, Liu Chengyin was interested in the practice and dissemination of internal alchemy practice, at least partially through the circulation of rubbings of the *Neijing tu* and *Xiuzhen tu* (see also Goossaert 2007, 285-93). In addition to studying and practicing under Zhang Yuanxuan, Liu allegedly built a small self-cultivation retreat called Zizhu daoyuan 紫竹道院 (Daoist Cloister of Purple Bamboo), located in the modern park of the same name in the western suburb of Beijing, where he engaged in *neidan* training after his retirement from court.

Outside of the internal textual dimensions, the only known available historical information on this diagram comes from inscriptions in the *Neijing tu* itself. According to Liu Chengyin's colophon in the lower-left corner (see Figure 1):

This diagram has never been transmitted before. The fundamental reason for this is because the Way of the Elixir is vast and subtle, and there are obtuse people who do not have the ability to grasp it. Consequently, it rarely has been transmitted in the world.

I happened to observe the diagram among the books and paintings in the study (*zhai* 齋) of Gao Songshan 高松山. By chance, it was hanging on a wall. The skill used in its painting technique is finely executed. The annotations of the joints and articulations (*jinjie* 筋節), meridians and vessels (*mailuo* 脈絡) are clearly distinguished, and each one contains specific cavities (*qiao* 竅).

I examined [the diagram] for a long time and realized that my comprehension was growing. I began to realize that exhalation and inhalation (*huxi* 呼吸) as well as expelling and ingesting (*tu'na* 吐納) of the human body are the waxing and waning as well as the ebb and flow of the cosmos.

If you can divine and gain insight into this, you will have progressed more than halfway on your inquiry into the great Way of the Golden Elixir (*jindan dadao* 金丹大道).

In truth, I did not dare to keep this for myself alone. Therefore, I had it engraved on a printing block [so that it might be] widely disseminated.

Engraved with deep reverence as an inscribed record by
Liu Chengyin, the Daoist Suyun

Printing block preserved at Baiyun guan in Beijing

With regard to the Gao Songshan mentioned in the above passage, it has most often been taken as a geographical name (Needham et al. 1983; Despeux 1994; 2000; Eichman 2000a; Wang 1991-92), but more than likely refers to a personal name. With regard to the former, Gao Songshan has been translated conventionally as "tall Pine Mountain" or as "lofty Mount Song." If these characters refer to a geographical location, the mountain mentioned here remains unidentified. There are numerous mountains called Songshan 松山 ("Pine Mountain") and presumably several of them or the pines on them were high.¹⁴ Despeux suggests that it refers to Songshan 嵩山 in Henan (1994, 44; 2000, 521), but the character *song* 嵩 ("lofty") in the famed Songshan is different from that in the *Neijing tu*.¹⁵ Liu Xun has recently suggested that Gao Songshan is a per-

¹⁴ See, e.g., the relevant entry in the *Zhongwen da cidian* 中文大辭典.

¹⁵ The famed Songshan 嵩山 does, of course, receive the designation Songgao 崧高 in a poem by that name in the *Shijing* 詩經 (Classic of Poetry) (see Legge 1893-95, vol. 4, 535). However, the context of the original *Neijing tu* engraving, that is, among Qing-dynasty court elite and by a court eunuch and Longmen monk, was most likely the urban environment of Beijing. There is no evidence that Liu Chengyin went "mountain-hopping" or "cloud-wandering" during which he happened upon the diagram, or that he received some esoteric transmission in a secret mountain cave, as much as such details would prove satisfying to Western romanticized ideas about "Daoism." Here we are dealing with a socio-economic and religio-historical context of imperial patronage and Daoist participation, which is substantiated by the fact that the original painting was

sonal name and most likely refers to Gao Rentong. This conjecture is based on the fact that Liu Chengyin had a close relationship with Abbot Gao and that Gao Rentong's Daoist name was Shoushan 壽山 (2004a, 94, n. 51). Moreover, historical contextualization, the fact that Liu was a Longmen monk at Baiyun guan, an associate and fellow ordinand of Gao, and a chief eunuch in Beijing, supports such a reading. However, if this is the case, then why does *song* 松 replace the character *shou* 壽 in Gao Rentong's Daoist name as engraved in the *Neijing tu* stele? One possibility is that Songshan was a nickname used by some of the Longmen Daoists at Baiyun guan, although I have found no evidence to support this conjecture. Another, complementary possibility is that the two characters, though visually unrelated, were seen as synonymous in a Daoist cultivational context. How would this be the case? Because pine trees (*song*), as evergreens, are a traditional symbol of longevity (*shou*).

Based on Liu Chengyin's testimony, the *Neijing tu* stele was produced from a painting or hanging scroll: "I happened to observe this diagram among the books and paintings in the studio of Gao Songshan. By chance, it was hanging on a wall." This scant piece of information is intriguing in terms of the physical location of the painting and the possible context of its use. Liu's comments, implying happenstance and fortuitousness, perhaps suggest that the painting was out of place or obscured by other aspects of Daoist and elite material culture. Was it just one item among other literati paraphernalia and thus simply part of the environment of late imperial court culture, an aesthetic representation of the human body? If so, how can one explain the clear embodiment of Daoist cultivational culture in the diagram?

The content, specifically the Chinese medical and Daoist alchemical dimensions, point in a different direction: as a visual aid for Daoist religious praxis, both as an overall existential approach and as a distinctive set of meditative techniques based on alchemical transformation. Under this reading, the painting may have only been taken out and hung during specific practice times—it "happened" to be out because Gao Songshan either had been studying the diagram, was about to begin seated meditation, had just completed a training session, or had not put the painting away after meditation. This possibility, in combination with the

most likely executed by a high-level artist in the service of the Qing imperial household (below).

specifically Daoist content of the diagram, give further pause for reflection: Was the original *Neijing tu* painting specifically made for Gao Rentong, perhaps under his personal direction regarding content and graphic depiction? Or, was it perhaps a gift from the Qing imperial household upon his ascent to the position of abbot of Baiyun guan in 1881 (five years before the engraving of the *Neijing tu*)? If so, the fact that Gao Rentong possessed such a painting tells us something noteworthy about the relationship among the Qing ruling elite, Baiyun guan, and the Longmen lineage in the late nineteenth century: Baiyun guan and its abbot were recognized as an integral and necessary dimension of Qing imperial power (see Esposito 2000; 2001; Liu 2004a; 2004b; Goossaert 2007).

Beyond such conjectures, Liu's brief remarks point us towards an earlier painting that was the original version of the *Neijing tu* and served as the basis for the commissioned and received *Neijing tu* stele. One such painting is currently housed in the Zhongguo yishi bowu guan 中國醫史博物館 (Museum of Chinese Medical History) in Beijing, and this painting appears to be the original Qing-dynasty one (see Fu et al. 1999, 200; also Rousselle 1933; Wang 1991-92, 143; Li 1992, 85; Despeux 1994, 44; Liu 2004a, 94, n. 51). It is generally held that this painting was a product of the Ruyi guan 如意館 (Ruyi Studio), the Qing imperial art academy and part of the Qing Imperial Household Department (*neiwu bu* 內務部). It too thus dates to the Qing dynasty, though the exact date and architect of production are currently unknown. In textual and visual content, the extant painting directly parallels the *Neijing tu* stele of Baiyun guan with some minor discrepancies.¹⁶

¹⁶ As both Joseph Needham et al. (1983) and Catherine Despeux (1994) have pointed out, at least some of the inspiration for the *Neijing tu* derives from earlier Daoist drawings and illustrations of the human body found in the Ming-dynasty Daoist Canon. It is beyond the scope of the present study to document all of the earlier precedents for the *Neijing tu*, both in terms of textual and visual content. From my perspective, the most significant earlier diagrams are as follows: the late Tang (618-907) *Shangqing dongzhen jiugong zifang tu* 上清洞真九宮紫房圖 (DZ 156), which includes parallel diagrams of the body and pavilions, with the latter resembling the depiction of the first pass in the lower section of the *Neijing tu*; the thirteenth-century *Huangdi bashiyi nanjing zuantu jujie* 黃帝八十一難經纂圖句解 (DZ 1024), which contains diagrams entitled *neijing tu* 內境圖 (4a-5b), the first of which closely resembles the received *Xiuzhen tu* 修真圖; the *Zazhu jiejing* 雜著捷徑, as contained in the early fourteenth-century *Xiuzhen shishu* 修真十書 (DZ 263),

Certain features also stand out. First, the colors used in the painting increase the aesthetic power and energetic quality. The green and brown sections of the painting create a heightened contrast and visual impact with the white, red, and blue sections, with the latter being some of the most important locations for alchemical transformation. The painting also substantiates the fact that the two circles in the head region are the eyes: the left one is red, representing the sun, and the right one is white, representing the moon. In addition, the energetic movement depicted in the painting, and perhaps being activated in the viewer's own body, is even stronger than in the extant stele and related rubbings. The movement clearly begins at the base of the torso, moves up the spine, and around the head. The connection between the Ren 任 (Conception) and Du 督 (Governing) vessels (below) receives greater emphasis through the two sets of five bands being multi-colored in the painting. Finally, the painting contains an additional visual dimension: two complete circles of white light. The first surrounds the torso and represents the joining of the Ren and Du vessels, with the peak of the head clearly emphasized. The second surrounds the head. Both suggest the formation or activation of the Daoist subtle body, including the emergence of pure white or golden light as a sign of alchemical transformation.

which has not only diagrams and an essay entitled *neijing tu* 內境圖 (18.2b-3b) but also essays on inner observation (*neiguan* 內觀), the Nine Palaces (*jiugong* 九宮), three fields (*santian* 三田), five yin-orbs (*wuzang* 五臟), and so forth (18.5b-9b); and the *Jindan dayao tu* 金丹大要圖, DZ 1068, which contains a diagram of the human body as a mountain that includes some parallel content with the *Neijing tu*. In terms of "extra-canonical" texts, there are important diagrams in the early seventeenth-century *Xingming guizhi* 性命圭旨 (ZW 314), late eighteenth-century *Huiming jing* 慧命經 (ZW 131), early twentieth-century *Xingming fajue mingzhi* 性命法訣明指 (ZW 872), and of course the received *Xiuzhen tu*. Most of these were in circulation and/or accessible in the Baiyun guan environs of the late nineteenth century. However, one clear difference stands out: the *Neijing tu* is solely a mapping of the Daoist subtle or alchemical body, lacking flesh and a "body" as conventionally understood. It is the body within the body actualized through alchemical praxis. For an attempt to trace the history of diagrams related to "cultivating perfection" (*xiuzhen* 修真) see Skar 2000. For a chronological chart of such maps in terms of Chinese "science" see Zhu 1995, 343.

Terminological Contours

The title of the *Neijing tu* has been rendered into Western languages in a variety of ways.¹⁷ Most commentators agree on the standard rendering of *nei* 內 as "inner," "interior," or "internal," though *nei* may also have the connotation of "esoteric." Similarly, *tu* 圖 poses relatively little difficulty, and is commonly translated as "illustration," "chart," "map," or "diagram" (see Reiter 1990; Despeux 2000; Strassberg 2002). The crux of the translation enterprise rests on *jing* 經, most frequently encountered in the sense of "scripture," "classic," or "text." The character is composed of the "silk" (*si* 絲) radical and the phonetic *jing* 𠂔. Taken in this way, various meanings branch out: "text/classic," "to pass through," "to regulate," "to arrange," "the warp (of a fabric)," and "meridians" or "arteries." Equally plausible, and implied by some of these connotations, is that the *jing* phonetic element is also a meaning-carrier. Etymologically speaking, it refers to streams running underground or flowing water. Thus, one could translate the *jing* 經 of the *Neijing tu* as "watercourse;" the *Neijing tu* might then be understood as the "Diagram of Internal Watercourses."

While my own preferred translation is "Diagram of Internal Pathways," a variety of meanings are intended. On one level, it is a diagram of the "inner currents" or "inner meridians." Here one may recall the following passage from chapter one of the *Huangdi neijing lingshu* 黃帝內經靈樞 (Yellow Thearch's Inner Classic: Numinous Pivot; DZ 1020):

Generally speaking, the twenty-seven [locations through which] qi ascends and descends are as follows: where it [qi] emerges is called wells (*jing* 井); where it flows is called brooks (*ying* 榮); where it rushes forth is called rapids (*shu* 腠); where it proceeds is called streams (*jing* 經); where it disappears is called confluences (*he* 合). (DZ 1020, 1.3b; see also *Nanjing* 難經 ch. 68; Unschuld 1986, 577)

¹⁷ The title of the *Neijing tu* has received the following translations: "Die Tafel des Inneren Gewebes" (Rousselle 1933, 207); "Diagram of the Internal Texture of Man" (Needham et al. 1983, 114); "Diagram of the Internal Circulation of Man" (Wang 1991/92, 141); "Carte de la vision intérieure du corps" (Despeux 1994, 47); and "Illustration of Inner Circulation" (Eichman 2000a, 350).

The precise medical meaning of this passage remains open to a variety of interpretations, but *jing* is clearly present in the sense of “stream” and forms part of the technical description of the width and depth of the body’s qi-flow. In contemporary Chinese medical usage, these *jing*-stream areas are the places where the qi of the meridians is bigger, wider, and deeper. In these places, the flow of qi resembles a large current. They are commonly used in contemporary acupuncture as treatment points.¹⁸ While the *Neijing tu* obviously is not a map of the *jing*-stream locations, it nonetheless carries the sense of such technical medical terminology. It is a diagram of the meridians, the energetic pathways, of the human body. These views are confirmed by Liu Chengyin’s own comments in the colophon: “The skill used in its painting technique is finely executed. The annotations of the joints and articulations, meridians and vessels are clearly distinguished, and each one contains specific cavities.” In addition to “Diagram of Internal Watercourses,” one could thus translate the title as the “Diagram of Internal Meridians.”

The above comments suggest that multiple layers of meaning have been inscribed and encrypted in the *Neijing tu*. In addition to the various connotations of *jing* 經 as “stream” or “meridian,” I also would argue that two additional characters are implied by and embedded in the title. This argument is based on the actual contents of the *Neijing tu*, the intertextuality implied in its images and passages, and earlier historical precedents found in related Daoist body maps. The two characters to which I am referring are homonyms/cognates of *jing* 經-pathway. They are *jing* 境-landscape and *jing* 景-luminosities. With this implication, the *Neijing tu* is an illustration not only of the meridians of qi running through the body, but also of the Daoist body as terrestrial and cosmo-

¹⁸ For a discussion of these points in the context of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) see, e.g., Maciocia 1989, 335-53; Ellis et al. 1989; Deadman et al. 2001. In the present article, I use the phrase “Traditional Chinese Medicine” to refer to the medical system developed in Communist China during the second half of the twentieth century, specifically under the influence of allopathic medicine and a Western scientific and materialistic paradigm. “Classical Chinese medicine” refers to the worldview and practices documented in the early classics. For the most comprehensive English-language sources on the history of Chinese medicine see Lu 1980; Unschuld 1985; Eck 1996, 37-195; Needham et al. 2000; also Sivin 1987. Academic studies of Chinese medicine during the Qing dynasty are only beginning to be undertaken. See Unschuld 1998.

logical landscape and as the dwelling-place of inner luminosities or efulgences. From a Daoist perspective, the human body corresponds to, *embodies*, various "external" presences—mountains, altars, colors, rivers, constellations, temples, spirits, forests, and so forth. The *Neijing tu* maps the landscape which is the human self; in this sense, *jing*-pathway also alludes to the character *jing* 境 meaning "region" or "landscape." The *Neijing tu* may be understood as the "Internal Landscape Map." This argument is supported by the fact that the titles of earlier diagrams that also illustrate the internal regions of the body contain the phrase *neijing tu* 內境圖 (see *Zazhu jiejing* 雜著捷徑, DZ 263, 18.2b-3b; *Nanjing zuantu jujie* 難經纂圖句解, DZ 1024, 5a-6b; Needham et al. 1983, 109-10; Despeux 1994; Skar 2003).

Along with mapping the watercourses or meridians of the human body (*jing* 經-streams), and the landscape which is the human body (*jing* 境-landscape), the *Neijing tu* also alludes to the *jing* 景-luminosities which reside in various areas of the body. The *Neijing tu* maps various dimensions of the *Huangting jing* 黃庭經 (Scripture on the Yellow Court), which survives in a *neijing* 內景 (DZ 331) and *waijing* 外景 version (DZ 332) (see Schipper 1975; Robinet 1984; Huang 1990; Kroll 1996).¹⁹ Although in the titles of the *Huangting jing* these designations can and perhaps should be read as "esoteric" or "inner view" and "exoteric" or "outer view" respectively, in Shangqing Daoism and as a Daoist techni-

¹⁹ The technical terminology of the *Huangting jing*, especially its various esoteric names for the Daoist subtle body (e.g., *mingmen* 命門, *yuchi* 玉池, *sanguan* 三關, *santian* 三田, *jianggong* 絳宮, etc.) was utilized by internal alchemy lineages from the late Tang onwards (see Robinet 1989b; Pregadio and Skar 2000; Komjathy 2007). The Yellow Court (*huangting* 黃庭) of the title and mentioned throughout the scripture is most often read as referring to the spleen region. See, e.g., the eighth-century *Huangting waijing jing zhu* 黃庭外景經注, DZ 263, 58.1b-2a. However, it may also refer to the lower elixir field, associated with the abdominal region. In this respect, it corresponds to the location of the Ocean of Qi (*qihai* 氣海) in some *neidan* lineages. See, e.g., the tenth-century *Chuandao ji* 傳道集, DZ 263, 15.14b; and the seventeenth-century *Xingming guizhi* 性命圭旨, ZW 314, 9.518. Various attempts were also made in the Tang dynasty (618-907) to create visual representations based on the *Huangting jing*. See, e.g., *Huangting neijing jing zhu* 黃庭內景經註, DZ 402; also DZ 1032, 11.1a-12.27b; DZ 263, 55-60; and *Huangting neijing tu* 黃庭內景圖, DZ 432; also DZ 263, 54.

cal term *jing* 景 also alludes to the “luminosities” or “effulgences” in the body (see Homann 1971; Robinet 1989a; 1993). These are the inner body gods or radiant spirits which reside in different corporeal locations, specifically in the five yin-orbs, and which have associations in the Five Phase (*wuxing* 五行) system of correlative cosmology, specifically animal, direction and color associations (see below). In the central region of the *Neijing tu*, these body gods are identified according to the esoteric names of the orb spirits as found in the *Huangting jing*. In this sense, the *Neijing tu* may be understood as the “Diagram of Inner Luminosities,” adding yet another possible layer to already multiple meanings.

Topographical Reflections

The history of the received *Neijing tu*, a stone stele housed in the Quanzhen monastery of Baiyun guan, is as complex as its mapping of the Daoist body. Historical evidence, both internal and external to the diagram itself, suggests that the received stele (and its various rubbings) was based on an earlier stele, which was in turn produced from a still-earlier color painting. That painting may be considered the “source-text” and is possibly still extant in the Museum of Chinese Medical History of Beijing. The original painting of the *Neijing tu* was most likely produced within the Ruyi Studio, the Qing imperial art academy. It may have been made for or given to Gao Rentong (1841-1907), the twentieth-generation abbot of Baiyun guan, upon his ascension to abbotship in 1881. This painting was subsequently seen by Liu Chengyin (d. 1894), a Longmen monk and chief eunuch to Empress Dowager Cixi. As a major supporter of Longmen and Baiyun guan, and as a fellow ordinand and close friend of Abbot Gao, Liu Chengyin was instrumental in maintaining connections among the Longmen lineage, Baiyun guan and the Qing imperial house. He also commissioned the engraving the *Neijing tu* stele. This occurred in 1886, and the stele was later inlaid in the monastic compound of Baiyun guan with another Liu-commissioned stele depicting the Daoist body, namely, the *Xiuzhen tu* (Diagram on Cultivating Perfection).

These various details not only provide a window into late imperial Chinese religion and society; they also suggest a Daoist cultivational context in which seated meditation and alchemical praxis occupied a central position. The received *Neijing tu* is a map of the Daoist body, the Daoist

internal landscape utilized and actualized in Daoist practice. As such, it is the *Map of Internal Pathways*, charting the contours of the Daoist body as envisioned within the context of late imperial Daoism, especially within the Longmen and Wu-Liu *neidan* lineages and within the Baiyun guan environs. The terminological layers of its title, considered in concert with its contents, are multifaceted: it maps the body as alchemical crucible, as landscape, as cosmos, as soteriological locus.²⁰ It maps the many dimensions of Daoist conceptions of self, including, naturalistic, cosmological, theistic and alchemical visions. These incorporate earlier Daoist views, practice modalities, and parallel diagrams as well as dimensions of Chinese medicine and Buddhism. Within its contours, one finds mountain paths to be traversed, summits to be ascended, fields to be tilled, numinous presences to be awakened, and mystical corporeal spaces to be entered. In this way, the *Neijing tu* is one representation of the Daoist body, a body actualized through Daoist alchemical praxis.

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²⁰ The actual contents of the *Neijing tu* will be analyzed in part two of the present article, which will appear in the next issue of the *Journal of Daoist Studies*. In the second half of the study, I also examine contemporaneous, late imperial *neidan* literature that provides clues into the potential lineage of the *Neijing tu*.

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MAPPING THE DAOIST BODY

PART TWO

THE TEXT OF THE *NEIJING TU*

LOUIS KOMJATHY

Abstract

Part One of the present article, published in JDS 1 (2008), presented the historical and terminological contours of the *Neijing tu* 內經圖 (Diagram of Internal Pathways). As a late nineteenth-century stele commissioned by the Longmen monk and court eunuch Liu Chengyin 劉誠印 (Suyun 素雲, Pure Cloud; d. 1894), it is currently housed in the Baiyun guan 白雲觀 (White Cloud Monastery; Beijing). This installment focuses on the content of the diagram as well as the Daoist cultivation methods embedded in its contours.

I first provide a thorough analysis of the textual and visual dimensions of the *Neijing tu*, including a complete translation with the diagram divided into three sections. The article also clarifies some influences on this Daoist body map and its corresponding internal alchemy system, specifically indicating a possible connection with the emerging Wu-Liu 伍柳 sub-lineage of Longmen.

This analysis is followed by a reconstruction of Daoist alchemical practice as expressed in the *Neijing tu*. I emphasize three methods: praxis-oriented applications of classical Chinese medical views of the body; visualizations which draw their inspiration from the *Huangting jing* and find clear historical precedents in Shangqing Daoism; and the alchemical technique known as the Waterwheel or Microcosmic Orbit. The three techniques form an interconnected system, wherein the adept's overall psychosomatic health is maintained and strengthened, his body is osmized, and he awakens the mystical body, the body-beyond-the-body or yang-spirit, i.e., the culmination of alchemical transformation and the precondition for post-mortem transcendence.

Textual and Visual Contours

The major textual components of the *Neijing tu* are two poems written in regulated verse (*lǜshi* 律詩), or eight seven-character lines. They are located above and below the strand of trees on the left-hand side of the diagram. Since various lines from these poems are distributed throughout the diagram, attention to them is a prerequisite for further exploration. The most significant convergence between the lines of the poems with the visual content occurs in the following locations: the abdominal region, where the ox is plowing the lower elixir field (poem 2, line 1, abbr. 2.1); the heart region, where the Cowherd is stringing together coins to form the Northern Dipper (2.2); and the head region, where Laozi sits in meditation above the Buddhist monk with upstretched and supporting arms (2.5-6).

Other more general descriptions are also found, including references to the body as fields (*tian* 田) in the abdominal, heart and head regions (1.1, 2.1); the white pearl above the head as the grain of millet that contains the world (2.3); and the head region or the Ren and Du vessels as the location where the mystery beyond mystery is realized (2.7-8). Finally, there are a number of streams flowing into and through the head, which parallel the reference to the spring in the Upper Valley (1.6). Certain sections of *Neijing tu* thus seem to have been executed as specific illustrations of these lines.

The poems themselves are found in the fifteenth-century *Lüzū zhi* 呂祖志 (Records of Patriarch Lü; DZ 1484).¹ They are attributed to Lü Dongbin 呂洞賓 (Chunyang 純陽 [Purified Yang]; b. 798 C.E.), the semi-legendary patriarch of various internal alchemy (*neidan* 內丹) lineages. Numerous *neidan* texts have been attributed to Lü Dongbin and his supposed teacher Zhongli Quan 鍾離權, which form the so-called Zhong-Lü 鍾呂 textual tradition (see Baldrian-Hussein 1984, especially 23-31; Boltz 1987, 139-43). Lü Dongbin is also recognized as a patriarch of both Quanzhen and the so-called Nanzong 南宗 (Southern School). The inclusion of these poems in the *Neijing tu* points to its internal alchemy con-

¹ Numbers for works appearing in Daoist textual collections follow Komjathy 2002, with those for the Ming-dynasty Daoist Canon (DZ) paralleling Schipper and Verellen 2004. Other abbreviations include JH (*Daozang jinghua*), JHL (*Daozang jinghua lu*), JY (*Daozang jiyao*), and ZW (*Zangwai daoshu*).

text, though the exact lineage of late imperial *neidan* is currently unclear and awaits further research. Does the *Neijing tu* embody a distinctive synthesis, which in some respect represents a new *neidan* lineage? Or did it emerge as one expression of a specific lineage of internal alchemy? As discussed in the previous installment of the present article and below, there are some clear and intriguing parallels with the emerging Wu-Liu 伍柳 sub-lineage of Longmen and with the sub-sect of the Wu-Liu lineage called the Qianfeng 千峰 lineage,² which was established in early twentieth century by Zhao Bichen 趙避塵 (Shunyi 順一 [Attuned Unity]; 1860-1942) and which came to occupy a central place in modern Daoism. In terms of the *Neijing tu*, the former, as an identifiable lineage, is roughly contemporaneous, while the latter is slightly later.

The upper poem reads:

I am properly and attentively cultivating my own field—
 Inside there are numinous sprouts that live for ten thousand years.
 The flowers resemble yellow gold, their color not uncommon;
 The seeds are like jade grain, their fruits perfectly round.
 Cultivation completely depends on the earth of the Central Palace;
 Irrigation necessarily relies on the spring in the Upper Valley.
 The practice is completed suddenly and I attain the great Dao—
 I wander carefree over land and water as an immortal of Penglai.
 (See also DZ 1484, 4.16a)

The emphasis here is on self-cultivation and alchemical transformation. The central metaphor is agricultural—just as the horticulturalist must attentively tend his or her garden, so the Daoist adept must focus on specific elixir fields (*dantian* 丹田) throughout the body. In the *Neijing tu*, these fields are identified by name: the middle elixir field just below the heart is “Gen-mountain earth” (*gentu* 根土),³ while the lower elixir

² This sub-lineage derives its name from the Mount Qianfeng (Hebei), and Zhao Bichen was directed to found it by his teacher Liaokong 了空 (Realized Emptiness; fl. 1895), who was a Chan monk. Interestingly, Liaokong claimed to have received direct instruction under Liu Huayang in 1799. See *Xingming fajue mingzhi*, ZW 872; *Weisheng sanzi fajue jing*, ZW 873; Lu 1970; Despeux 1979.

³ The phrase “Gen-mountain” appears in the *Neijing tu* near the Cowherd and refers to the trigram 艮 designating “mountain” as well as to hexagram 52,

field near the level of the navel is called the "correct [standard] elixir field" (*zheng dantian* 正丹田).⁴ Like tilling, planting, and harvesting crops, the process of internal alchemy involves a cultivation cycle; one must prepare the ground and develop the appropriate physiological and cosmological aspects, for which the *Neijing tu* serves as a map of the Daoist internal landscape and as a visual aid for alchemical transformation. In the above poem, the fruits of Daoist cultivation are "flowers the color of yellow gold" and "seeds like jade grain," both poetic descriptions of specific alchemical experiences. Planted as a seed in the lower elixir field, and nourished through consistent attentiveness (*yi* 意) and dedication (*zhi* 志), qi accumulates and expands. With yellow being associated with the Earth phase in Chinese correlative cosmology (see, e.g., Unschuld 1985; Major 1993), and as one of the esoteric names of the lower elixir field is the Yellow Court (*huangting* 黃庭), the poem suggests that the perfect qi (*zhenqi* 真氣), the qi activated and circulated in internal alchemy practice, becomes a stronger presence in the body. The body becomes rarified.

"Gen-mountain" 艮. In Daoist internal alchemy, the trigrams represent various psycho-physiological aspects of the human being and stages in self-transformation. The "Gen-mountain" trigram may, in turn, express the state of stillness as well as practices that help nourish such a condition. In the present case, the reference to the heart region as the "field of Gen-mountain earth" suggests that excess emotional and intellectual activity has become stilled. An example of this type of Daoist exegesis on the *Yijing* 易經 may be found in Liu Yi-ming's 劉一明 (Wuyuan 悟元 [Awakening to the Origin]; 1734-1821) *Zhouyi chanzhen* 周易闡真 (True Explanation of the *Yijing*), collected in his *Daoshu shier zhong* 道書十二種 (Twelve Daoist Books). The *Zhouyi chanzhen* appears in ZW 245 and has been translated in Cleary 1986. In terms of the present discussion, see especially Cleary 1986, 103-5, 194-97, and 207-9.

⁴ It should be noted that the locations of the upper, middle, and lower elixir fields change depending on the system of alchemy being employed. As in the *Neijing tu*, the most frequent locations are in the head, solar plexus/heart region, and the lower abdomen. See, for example, the eleventh-century *Yunji qiqian*, DZ 1032, 59.2a; also Li 1991, 70, 80, 139; Min and Li 1994, 70, 110, 125, 272; Hu 1995, 482, 745, 1141, 1449, 1675, 1681. In some contemporary forms of *neidan*, the three elixir fields are the head, lower abdomen and perineum, with the latter referred to as Huiyin 會陰 and associated with vital essence. Author's field observations.

This is one manifestation of the golden elixir (*jindan* 金丹) mentioned in the poem and in Liu Chengyin's colophon. "The earth of the Central Palace" most likely refers to the Scarlet Palace (*jiangong* 絳宮), the area just below the heart. This interpretation receives substantiation by the placement of the poem in the *Neijing tu* in line with the Cowherd (the heart region). Following the mapping of Daoist cultivation in the *Neijing tu*, the Daoist practitioner must still the emotions and nourish spirit, both associated with the Fire phase and thus with the heart. In addition, the poem emphasizes the practice of swallowing the Jade Dew (*yuye* 玉液; saliva), a central component of forming the elixir of immortality (see Komjathy 2007, ch. 6). At the end of the poem, we also find an allusion to chapter one of the *Zhuangzi* 莊子 (Book of Master Zhuang; DZ 670), entitled "Xiaoyao you" 逍遙遊 (Carefree Wandering); the Daoist adept, like the great Peng bird, wanders effortlessly through the troubles of the world and maintains a more all-encompassing perspective. According to the author of the poem, dedication to such cultivation techniques will lead to attunement with the Dao and immortality, symbolized as entrance into the eastern paradise of Penglai Island.

The second poem again orients one towards the importance of cultivation. Through alchemical transformation, the Daoist adept comes to encompass and be encompassed by the entire universe. The mutual resonance between the human body and the cosmos, and the embodiment of the cosmos within and as the human body, becomes realized (see Schipper 1978; 1993; Kohn 1991a).

The iron ox plows the field where golden coins are sown;
Engraving the stone, the young lad holds a string of cash.
A single grain of millet contains the entire world;
Mountains and streams are decocted in a half-*sheng* cauldron.
The eyebrows of white-headed Laozi hang down to the earth,
And the blue-eyed foreign monk holds up the heavens.
Orient yourself towards the mysterious and it is realized—
Outside of this mystery there is no other mystery.

(see also DZ 1484, 5.11a)

The first line emphasizes the practice of tending to the body's fields. While this involves effort and prolonged practice, symbolized by the ox (cf. Needham et al. 1983, 100; Wang 1991-92, 151; Eichman 2000a, 351),

the outcome will be golden coins. Based on the illustrations of the *Neijing tu* and the placement of the poem, the primary body location being emphasized is that of the lower elixir field. Again taking into account the above-mentioned associations of yellow and gold with the Earth phase and with the lower elixir field, the sowing and gathering of "golden coins" indicates an increased level of energetic presence in the lower abdominal region, the primary storehouse of qi in the body. Like the previous encounter with "flowers of yellow gold," and like the discovery of gold in general, this fruit is a rare and precious occurrence in the world.

"A grain of millet contains the world" alludes to the famous "Yellow Millet Dream" (*huangliang meng* 黃粱夢) of Lü Dongbin. According to one hagiography, found in the Yuan-dynasty (1260-1368) *Zengxiang liexian zhuan* 增象列仙傳 (Illustrated Biographies of Arrayed Immortals; see Kohn 1993, 126-32; cf. *Chunyang shenhua ji*, DZ 305, 1.3a-5a), until the age of sixty-four Lü Dongbin, although practicing Daoist cultivation, still harbored political aspirations. Having failed to pass the imperial examination twice, one day Lü encounters Zhongli Quan, an accomplished Daoist adept. Zhongli Quan in turn invites Lü to an inn for a meal, during the preparation of which Lü falls asleep. He then dreams of an entire official career, beginning with success and fame and ending with failure, humiliation, and despondency. When he awakens from this dream, the millet is still being cooked. In even less time than it takes to cook millet, Lü experiences one possible life and the dissipation involved in seeking fame and reputation. He in turn becomes the disciple of Zhongli Quan (who knew of the dream before Lü told him), and eventually commits himself solely to Daoist cultivation, thus coming to represent the aspiring Daoist practitioner in general.

Through such dedication, "mountains and streams are decocted in a half-*sheng* cauldron." One engages in the actualization and refinement of internal presences and comes to reside in a larger matrix of being. The entire universe is the context for one's cultivation and one's very existence becomes cosmicized. As illustrated in the contours of the *Neijing tu*, the adept engaging in alchemical praxis discovers that the body contains streams, mountains, fields, forests, temples and constellations. One's body is the cosmos, and the cosmos is one's body. Although such conventional distinctions like "cosmos" and "self," or "internal" and "external," are potentially necessary at the beginning of alchemical praxis, the

final outcome of alchemical transformation, rarification and perhaps self-divinization, results in the activation of the Daoist mystical body (see Komjathy 2007), a body which is transpersonal and infused with the Dao's numinosity. This involves "orienting yourself towards the mysterious." The final lines of the poem, with the frequent repetition of "mysterious" (*xuan* 玄), invoke chapter one of the *Daode jing* 道德經 (Scripture on the Dao and Inner Power): "Mysterious and again more mysterious—the gateway to all wonders." The Daoist adept merges with the twofold mystery which is the Dao. He or she literally shifts ontological conditions, abiding in a state of mystical pervasion with the Dao as a mystery beyond mystery, as a mystery simultaneously present and absent in its own mysteriousness. It is this presence-absence that also circulates through the adept's own body as numinous currents. Here one encounters perhaps one of the most significant Daoist challenges to conventional understandings of human being: one's physiology literally is sacred. One *embodies* the Dao, and one may experience the Dao through/in/as one's own psychosomatic and energetic being. The bifurcation of "transcendent divine" and "mundane material processes" breaks down in this Daoist vision of self.

Beyond the two poems which provide a general description of the alchemical endeavor, the diagram as a whole can be seen to depict the Daoist alchemical practice of reversal in combination with the Microcosmic Orbit method. Here I concentrate on the textual and visual aspects of the *Neijing tu*, while in the subsequent section I provide a more systematic explanation of the practices in the context of Daoist internal alchemy praxis. The aspiring adept must seal himself or herself off from various sources of dissipation, including sensory and emotional distractions. He or she must turn inward through meditative praxis to realize a return to psychosomatic and cosmological integration. For male adepts in particular, they must prevent dissipation of their core vitality, vital essence (*jing* 精), which occurs through sexual activity and resulting seminal emission. One of the foundations of the alchemical process is the retention, circulation and transformation of the body fluids (see Komjathy 2007). In the *Neijing tu*, this is depicted as movement of vital essence, the water of the body, being reversed and transferred upward.

Beginning at the first pass, one notices a boy and a girl working a treadmill, representing yang and yin respectively (see Fig. 2).

The caption next to them reads "the mysterious yin-yang treadmill." The longer textual component explains,



Repeatedly, constantly, [the treadmill] is peddled in cycles;
When the mechanism revolves, the water flows eastward.
The water, ten-thousand fathoms deep, is seen straight to its bottom;
A sweet spring bubbles up, rising to the summit of Southern
Mountain.

By using the intent and sealing the lower gate, the perineum, the adept reverses the flow of vital essence. Instead of moving outward in the form of seminal emission for male adepts and menstrual blood for female adepts, both primary forms of dissipation, the vital essence becomes conserved, stored, circulated and transformed. Reference to the eastward flow of the vital essence (*jing* 精) also makes sense when read in relation to Weilü 尾閭 (Tailbone Gate; the coccyx) as the first pass.⁵ According to the *Zhuangzi*,

Considering the waters of the world, none is greater than the ocean. Ten thousand streams flow into it—there has never been a time when they ceased, but the ocean is never full. The water leaks out at Weilü—there has never been a time when it stopped, but the ocean is never empty. (17/42/6-8; cf. Watson 1968, 176).

The occurrence of Weilü in the *Neijing tu* also adds an additional “mythological” component to its mapping of the Daoist body and the Daoist internal landscape. Just as the waters of the ocean are turned into vapor at the Weilü rock, so too the body has a corresponding place in the coccyx, identified as the first point on the Governing vessel (GV-1) in contemporary Chinese medicine (see Ellis et al. 1989; Deadman et al. 2001). The lower section of the *Neijing tu* informs the viewer that “the Kan-water flows in reverse”, that is, the vital essence, associated with the

⁵ The Three Passes (*sanguan* 三關) are usually identified as Tailbone Gate (*weilü* 尾閭; the coccyx), Narrow Ridge (*jiaji* 夾脊; mid-spine), and Jade Pillow (*yuzhen* 玉枕; occiput). See, for example, the thirteenth-century *Jindan dacheng ji* 金丹大成集, *Xiuzhen shishu*, DZ 263, 10.6b; the thirteenth-century *Dadan zhizhi* 大丹直指, DZ 244, 1.4a, 1.5a, 1.12a; and the seventeenth-century *Xingming guizhi*, ZW 314, 9.518.

trigram Kan-water ☵ and the kidneys,⁶ is redirected upwards. In contrast to the "normal" flow of essence outward as a source of dissipation, the Daoist adept, using his or her intent, guides vital essence and qi through Weilü and initiates the "reversion" (*fan* 反; *huan* 還) of vital essence to repair the marrow and brain (see below).

With regard to the ascent of the bubbling spring to Southern Mountain, Wang suggests that Southern Mountain "should be the mountain range of the same name in the south of Xinjiang, which is regarded as a major branch of Mount Kunlun" (Wang 1991-92, 150). As the head is frequently referred to as Mount Kunlun 崑崙 in Daoist cultivation,⁷ Southern Mountain suggests the movement of the vital essence and qi from the lower regions of the body (north) into the upper regions (south), specifically into the head area. Mount Kunlun in the west, in addition to Penglai Island in the east, is a terrestrial paradise and home to various immortals (*xian* 仙). In chapter eleven of the *Shanhai jing* 山海經 (Classic of Mountains and Seas), a major source of Chinese mythology which contains material from the third century B.C.E. to the second century C.E., Mount Kunlun is described as an epicenter of the universe, where the heavens and the earth are perfectly harmonized (see Birrell 1999a, 139-41; 1999b, 183-85). This aspect of the map hints at the Daoist goal of attaining immortality, realizing complete cosmological alignment, mystical

⁶ In Daoist *neidan* praxis, the eight trigrams (*bagua* 八卦), commonly associated with the *Yijing* 易經 (Classic of Change), have various correspondences. The trigrams are as follows: (1) Qian-heaven (*qian* 乾) ☰, (2) Kun-earth (*kun* 坤) ☷, (3) Li-fire (*li* 離) ☲, (4) Kan-water (*kan* 坎) ☵, (5) Dui-lake (*dui* 兌) ☱, (6) Zhen-thunder (*zhen* 震) ☳, (7) Sun-wind (*sun* 巽) ☴, and Gen-mountain (*gen* 艮) ☶. See the tenth-century *Chuandao ji* 傳道集, DZ 263, 14.11b; and thirteenth-century *Jindan dacheng ji* 金丹大成集, DZ 263, 10.12b.

⁷ One of the earliest usages of Kunlun as a reference to the head, and thus to the interiorization of paradise and immortality, appears in the third-century *Huangting waijing jing* 黃庭外景經, DZ 332, 1.1b, also 2.1b. See also the eighth-century *Huangting waijing jing zhu* 黃庭外景經注, DZ 263, 58.7a; *Jindan dayao tu*, DZ 1068, 3a; *Xingming guizhi*, ZW 314, 9.318. For some classical references to Kunlun in Daoism see Li 1991, 339; Min and Li 1994, 637; Hu 1995, 1164, 1176, 1381, 1644.

pervasion and/or self-divinization.⁸ In addition, the reference to the “spring bubbling up” (*quanyong* 泉湧) may be an inversion of Yongquan 湧泉 (Bubbling Spring), located in the center of the sole of foot and identified as the first point on the kidney meridian in contemporary Chinese medicine.⁹ This reading adds additional support for the connection of Kan-water ䷜ with vital essence, as the kidneys house vital essence.

Above “the mysterious yin-yang treadmill,” there are two furnaces with flames flaring up, four Taiji diagrams, and a ploughboy tending his ox (see Fig. 2). Based on their location in the diagram, the furnaces symbolize the elixir fields where vital essence and qi are stored, transformed and circulated.¹⁰ According to the contours of the *Neijing tu*, the aspiring Daoist adept must focus his or her intent on various locations in the body, especially on Weilü (Tailbone Gate; the coccyx), Qihai 氣海 (Ocean of Qi; the abdomen), and Mingmen 命門 (Gate of Life; between the kidneys) to increase the fire and circulate qi. As noted, agricultural metaphors abound, and the ploughboy and ox suggest focused attention on the process of alchemical transformation, especially on the conservation, transformation and circulation of vital essence and qi.

⁸ The meaning of *xian* 仙 (“immortal” or “transcendent”) varies according to the specific Daoist sub-tradition and historical moment. In the *Neijing tu*, immortality would seem to refer to long life and alchemical transformation. It also seems to be taken as parallel to “enlightenment” or “realization” in Chan Buddhism. In the case of the Daoist tradition, whether or not becoming a *xianren* 仙人 or *zhenren* 真人 means personal continuation after death is an open question, and one that requires critical reflection and more in-depth historical research.

⁹ Within Daoism, a clear depiction of Yongquan as located in the center of the soles of the feet appears in the *Xiuzhen tu*. See Despeux 1994; 2000.

¹⁰ In *neidan* lineages, a distinction is often made between the “stove” or “furnace” (*lu* 爐) and “cauldron” or “tripod” (*ding* 鼎). E.g., the fourteenth-century *Yuqing danjue* 玉清丹訣, DZ 240, 2.16a; cf. *Xiuzhen shishu*, DZ 263, 10.2b.

The four Taiji diagrams may be interpreted in a variety of ways.¹¹ Under one reading, and the one that I would suggest is primary, the diagrams symbolize the harmonization of the Five Phases through attentiveness on lower elixir field, the central storage location for qi. In this case, the four diagrams would represent all of the phases (Wood [east, azure, liver, ethereal soul], Fire [south, red, heart, spirit], Metal [west, white, lungs, corporeal soul], and Water [north, black, kidneys, vital essence or will]) except that of the Earth, which often occupies the center, or stillness, in Daoist cultivation. Stillness, sometimes spoken of as Perfect Earth (*zhentu* 真土), unites all of the other phases.¹² An alternative reading, proposed by Schipper, suggests that these Taiji diagrams represent the qi phases of the elixir field (Schipper 1978, 356).¹³ There is no reason to believe that such interpretations are mutually exclusive; these layers of meaning, along with others unmentioned here, may all be embedded in this section of the *Neijing tu*. The most important thing to note is the centrality of the lower elixir field in the *Neijing tu*, in its mapping of the Daoist body, and in its system of alchemical transformation.

Moving up the spine still further, one arrives at the flames between the vertebrae below of the second pass. This is Mingmen 命門 (Gate of Life), which is again connected with vital essence and its transformation into qi.¹⁴ Charted according to function in contemporary Chinese medi-

¹¹ The history of the standard, modern Taiji symbol, and the ones depicted in the *Neijing tu* (i.e., a circle divided into interconnected white [yang] and black [yin] aspects that contain a dot [seed] of the alternate colors [yin-yang aspects]), is currently unclear. For some insights see the relevant entry on the "Critical Terms" page of the Center for Daoist Studies website (www.daoistcenter.org). Its historical usage in Chinese culture and among Daoists is complex.

¹² There are a variety of extant diagrams called *Zhentu tu* 真土圖 (Diagram of Perfect Earth), wherein "perfect earth" is associated with the Yellow Court and intent, or thinking (*yi* 意). See, e.g., *Zazhu zhixuan pian* 雜著指玄篇, DZ 263, 1.5a; *Xingming guizhi*, ZW 314, 9.523. The latter diagram emphasizes stilling the heart center.

¹³ Unfortunately, Schipper does not provide a detailed explanation of these "qi phases of the *dantian*." Such technical information might add a deeper understanding of Daoist cultivation.

¹⁴ The term appears as early as the third-century *Huangting jing*. See DZ 331, 11b; DZ 332, 1.1a. According to the eighth-century *Huangting neijing jing zhu*, "The Gate of Life is the lower elixir field" (DZ 402, 3.19b). However, both the

cine, where it is identified as the fourth point on the Governing Vessel (see Ellis et al. 1989; Deadman et al. 2001), Mingmen as an energetic location in the body has the ability to regulate the Governing vessel, to tonify the kidneys, to nourish the spine and marrow, and to strengthen the five yin-orbs (*wuzang* 五藏). Ascending still higher, there are two captions: “cavity of the two kidney storehouses” and “mountains and streams are decocted in a half-*sheng* cauldron” (see Figs. 3, 4).

Comparing the *Neijing tu* stele with the Qing-dynasty colored painting (see Fu et al. 1999, 200), the first caption, which reads “cavity of the left and right kidney storehouses” in the painting, should have been engraved at the level of the Weaving Maiden (the kidney region). It obviously refers to the kidneys and their corresponding location in the lower section of the map. Here is one direct convergence between this mapping of Daoist alchemical transformation and classical Chinese medical views: the kidneys are the storehouse of vital essence and thus the foundation of one’s core vitality (see *Huangdi neijing suwen* 黃帝內經素問, chs. 3, 8, 9, 10, 23; Ross 1985; Maciocia 1989, 67-110; Unschuld 2003, 124-44; also Needham et al. 1983, 22; Wang 1991-92, 150; below). Thus one can make the argument that the centrality of Mingmen and the kidneys in this section of the *Neijing tu* and in its corresponding system of self-cultivation strengthens the adept’s physical constitution and prepares the way for more advanced training, specifically rarification through alchemical transformation.

Ascending the mountain path still further, there are two additional phrases in line with the third temple or hut in the spine: “upper pass of jade perfection” and “cavity of the numinous peak.” These lines refer to the upper pass known as Yuzhen 玉枕 (Jade Pillow). Passing through these various locations, the vital essence and qi eventually enter the head. Attention is drawn to the Three Passes as they are areas through which it is difficult for the qi to pass and thus the intent is often used to help open them.

Xiuzhen tu and *Xingming guizhi* (ZW 314, 9.518) clearly place Mingmen in the kidney region along the spine.



Passing through the final pass, one arrives at the mountain peaks that, from a Daoist perspective, are the various energetic locations in the head (see Fig. 4). While the upper section of *Neijing tu* contains a variety of textual components that can easily lead to confusion, an attempt to negotiate them offers significant contributions. First and foremost, one notices the graphic component depicting the Nine Peaks (*jiufeng* 九峰), some of which are in the center of the head. Sometimes synonymous with the Nine Palaces (*jiugong* 九宮), these peaks are associated with traditional Daoist subtle anatomy and physiology and are utilized in Daoist meditation methods.¹⁵

The second most elevated peak, corresponding to Baihui 百會 (Hundred Meetings; GV-20), the crown-point in contemporary Chinese medicine, is identified as the “Niwan Palace” (*niwan gong* 泥丸宮),¹⁶ a term that transliterates *nirvana* and literally means “mudball.” The point is also known as “prefecture of rising yang” (*shengyang fu* 昇陽府), shown in the diagram as a pearl or ball of light and related to the line “a grain of millet contains the world” from the Lü Dongbin poem. All of this, in combination with the phrase “to prolong longevity and [attain] immortality and Buddhahood,” suggests the final goal of Daoist internal alchemy—the creation of an immortal embryo (*taixian* 胎仙), also known as the “yang-spirit” (*yangshen* 陽神) or “body-beyond-the-body” (*shenwai shen* 身外身) (see Komjathy 2007). It may also be understood as nothing more than recovering the seed of original yang (*yuanyang* 元陽) that was within the practitioner all along. The fact that the diagram equates immortality and Buddhahood may add support for the suggestion that it

¹⁵ See the *Yuandan shangjing* 元丹上經, DZ 1345, 2b-8a; also *Zazhu jiejing*, DZ 263, 18.6ab. The fourteenth-century *Jindan dayao tu* 上陽子金丹大要圖 contains an earlier Daoist map of the body as a mountain that includes some of the names of the Nine Palaces. See DZ 1068, 3a; also Needham et al. 1983, 105; Despeux 1994, 41; Komjathy 2007, chs. 4 and 6.

¹⁶ In the *Neijing tu*, *niwan* is located above the head, and seemingly refers to Baihui as the location where the yang-spirit exits the adept’s body. However, Niwan is often associated with the upper elixir field. See, for example, the *Jindan dacheng ji*, DZ 263, 10.3b. For some depictions of the exit of the yang-spirit from the crown-point see *Xingming guizhi*, ZW 314, 9.585, 9.590; *Huiming jing*, ZW 131, 5.881; *Xingming fajue mingzhi*, ZW 872, 26.114, 26.119, 26.120.

derives from the Wu-Liu 伍柳 sub-lineage of Longmen (below), as that community has a text titled *Xianfo hezong* 仙佛合宗 (Common Lineage of Immortals and Buddhas; ZW 843).

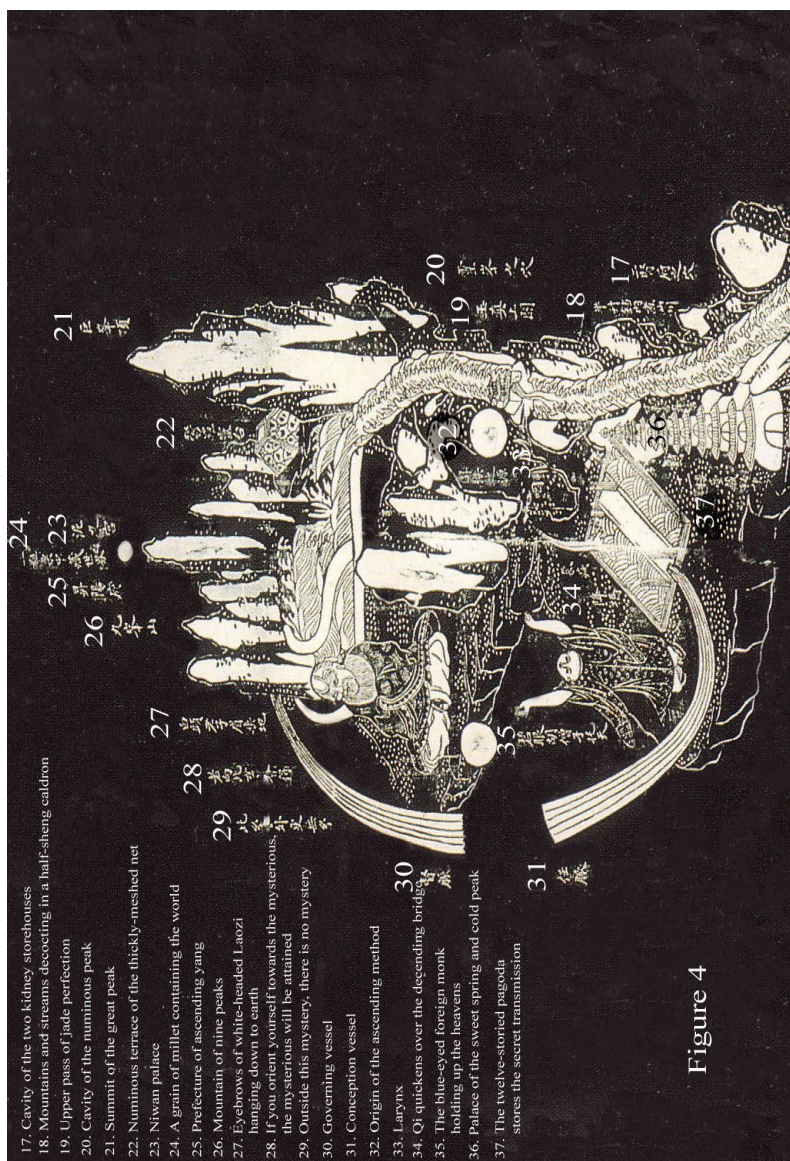


Figure 4

Here one also notices the “numinous platform of thickly-meshed net,” a phrase which also occurs in the fourteenth-century *Jindao dayao tu* 金丹大要圖 (Diagram of Great Essentials of the Golden Elixir; DZ 1068), a diagram depicting the Daoist body as a mountain and a clear precursor to the received *Neijing tu*. Eichman suggests that this phrase (and its corresponding graphic depiction) “implies the ultimate goal of alchemy, an audience with representatives of the celestial hierarchy” (2000a, 350). Like his or her terrestrial bureaucratic counterpart in relation to the terrestrial emperor, the Daoist practitioner seeks an audience with the highest realms of spirit beings, the gods and Perfected (*zhenren* 真人). This section of the diagram, then, invokes higher levels of alchemical refinement, ending (or beginning) in an energetic merging with the Dao. “If you orient yourself towards the mysterious, the mysterious may be realized” (see also Wang 1991-92, 145-46).

In the upper section of the diagram there is an old man sitting in meditation (see Fig. 4). He wears a robe with the stylized character for longevity (*shou* 壽), and above him there is the following inscription: “The eyebrows of white-headed Laozi hang down to the earth.” Below him is a figure with up-raised arms and the corresponding inscription: “The blue-eyed foreign monk holds up the heavens.” Both of these lines come from the Lü Dongbin poems. The most straightforward interpretation of the two figures identifies them as Laozi and Bodhidharma, respectively (see Rousselle 1933; Needham et al. 1983, 116). However, Wang, in a fairly convincing art historical discussion, argues that the iconography of the old man figure suggests the Immortal Old Man of the Southern Pole-star, the eighth spirit of the brain (Wang 1991-92, 146). This interpretation may partially derive from the figure’s placement at the energetic location corresponding to higher levels of consciousness, either Mingtang 明堂 (Hall of Light) and/or Zuqiao 祖竅 (Ancestral Cavity).¹⁷ Wang also challenges the identification of the blue-eyed monk as Bodhidharma, arguing instead that he should be understood as a combi-

¹⁷ As mentioned, in certain forms of Daoist meditation, Mingtang is included as one of the Nine Palaces and identified as a mystical cranial location. References to Zuqiao as another mystical cranial location at the center of the head appears in the *Xingming guizhi* (ZW 314) and throughout the pages of the *Xingming fajue mingzhi* (ZW 872).

nation of the Laughing Buddha and the element mercury and/or as Maitreya, the future Buddha (Wang 1991-92, 149).

While convincing from an art historical perspective and accounting for certain iconographic features, this reading fails to provide an adequate explanation of the two figures in terms of the larger Daoist tradition in general and *neidan* lineages associated with Lü Dongbin and late imperial Daoism in particular. Why would the person or community who originally envisioned, commissioned and produced such a mapping of the Daoist body include the Laughing Buddha and/or Maitreya?

If one follows a relatively straightforward reading that recognizes the potential connection between the textual and visual contours of the *Neijing tu*, then these figures are Laozi and Bodhidharma. In the poems attributed to Lü Dongbin, Laozi is mentioned by name and "the blue-eyed foreign monk" (*biyan huseng* 碧眼胡僧) is a standard name for Bodhidharma (a.k.a. Damo 達摩; see Xingyun 1989, 5848; also Ding 1939). In addition, with regard to late medieval *neidan* lineages, one finds these two figures as symbolic referents for alchemical ingredients: the old man symbolizes lead (*qian* 鉛), while the monk represents mercury (*hong* 汞) (see also Wang 1991-92, 147; Eichman 2000a, 351). They are referred to as such in the "Danfang baojian zhi tu" 丹房寶鑒之圖 (Diagram of the Precious Mirror of the Elixir Chamber), which is contained in *Xiuzhen shishu* 修真十書 (Ten Works on Cultivating Perfection; DZ 263, 26.5b-6a), an anthology of the early fourteenth century. Here mercury (Bodhidharma) is said to correspond to the jade *ye*-fluids (*yuye* 玉液), spirit water (*shen-shui* 神水), the Maiden (*chanü* 姮女), white snow (*baixue* 白雪), and the azure dragon (*qinglong* 青龍), among other things; lead (Laozi) is said to correspond to the gold *ye*-fluids (*jinye* 金液), Jade Pond (*yuchi* 玉池), the Child (*ying'er* 嬰兒), yellow sprouts (*huangya* 黃芽), and the white tiger (*baihu* 白虎), among other things. In other *neidan* discussions of these alchemical symbols/ingredients, lead may refer to vital essence (*jing* 精) or original spirit (*yuanshen* 元神), while mercury may refer to spirit (*shen* 神) or original *qi* (*yuanqi* 元氣).¹⁸

Based on these correspondences, a number of readings are possible. First, and most basic, the adept accumulates and gathers saliva, the *ye*-

¹⁸ Cf. *Ershisi jue* 二十四訣, DZ 1158, 1b and *Danyang yulu* 丹陽語錄, DZ 1057, 15b. See also *Chuandao ji*, DZ 263, 15.11a-15a.

fluids associated with Bodhidharma, in the mouth, the Jade Pond associated with Laozi. These fluids are then swallowed down to purify the heart and eventually commingle with original qi in the lower elixir field. In this respect, one may again reflect upon the symbolic meaning of Bodhidharma and Laozi as one's own physiology. Another possible reading is that original qi, associated with mercury and the figure of Bodhidharma, and original spirit, associated with lead and the figure of Laozi, become commingled in the adept's upper elixir field.

Reading the upper figure in the *Neijing tu* as Laozi also makes sense because Laozi is frequently recognized as the "founder" of the Daoist tradition and as the high god Laojun 老君 (Lord Lao).¹⁹ In the lives of specific Daoists and Daoist communities, he also came to symbolize the culmination of Daoist cultivation. He himself, after all, transformed into the universe:

Laozi transformed his form. His left eye became the sun, and his right eye became the moon. His head became Mount Kunlun. His beard became the planets and constellations. His bones became dragons; his flesh, wild animals; and his intestines, snakes. His belly became the ocean; his fingers, the five sacred mountains; and his hair, grasses and trees. His heart became the Flowery Canopy. Finally, his two kidneys were united and became the true father and mother. (*Xiaodao lun* 笑道論, T. 3102, 52.144b13-15; cf. *Yunji qiqian* 雲笈七籤, DZ 1032, 10.7b-8a; see Maspero 1981, 340; Schipper 1993, 114; also Kohn 1995, 54-55)²⁰

Laozi is the supremely long-lived, for he is the cosmos and the cosmos is he. The *Neijing tu* suggests that Laozi represents the Daoist adept's own possibility—each person's eyes, the two circles in the diagram, are the sun and the moon, and each practitioner's consciousness contains the numinous presence which "Laozi" embodied, at least from

¹⁹ For a revisionist historical analysis of the construction of Laozi as a "historical" personage see Graham 1998 (1986). For studies of the some of the ways in which he has been represented in the Daoist tradition see Seidel 1969; Kohn 1999.

²⁰ Here Laozi takes the place of the primordial being Pan Gu 盤古 (see Birrell 1999; Kohn 1993, 168-69; 1995).

certain emic perspectives. According to the diagram, the "essence" of the Dao and the Daoist tradition is literally contained in one's own brain. The human being, from this Daoist perspective, is a cosmological being: one's very own body contains mountains, temples, constellations and the locus for immortality and perfection. In some forms of Daoist religious praxis, specifically visualization (*cunxiang* 存想) and inner observation (*neiguan* 內觀) forms of meditation during the early and late medieval periods, the Daoist adept turns the light of the sun and moon (the eyes) inward, thus illuminating the internal landscape which is his or her own body (see Kohn 1989; Robinet 1989a; also below). One can also argue that, if the *Neijing tu* originates in a Longmen context, the significance of Laozi finds substantiation in the fact that he is identified as one of the so-called Five Patriarchs (*wuzu* 五祖) of early Quanzhen and as one of the Three Purities (*sanqing* 三清) in later Quanzhen. This, at the very least, may help to explain the enduring power of the *Neijing tu* as a mapping of Daoist existential and ontological possibility.

The significance of Bodhidharma is a bit more difficult to determine. One interpretation is that Bodhidharma, paralleling Laozi's place in many sectors of the Daoist tradition, represents the origin and essence of Chan (Zen) Buddhism. That is, the Chan tradition, considered as a whole, identifies him as the "founder" (Dumoulin 1988, 85-94).²¹ In addition to the above-mentioned alchemical symbolism, the inclusion of Bodhidharma may have been a way of gaining cultural capital, suggesting that *neidan* practice and Chan meditation led to the same goal. If this reading is convincing, the *Neijing tu* may also be suggesting the importance of cross-tradition cultivation practice. Here one thinks of Bodhidharma's mythic nine years of meditation, or "wall-gazing" (*biguan* 壁觀), as a symbol of intensive and dedicated religious praxis.²² Chan-inspired emp-

²¹ Critical and revisionist historiography on the Chan tradition in general and Bodhidharma in particular, paralleling such research on Daoism and Laozi, questions the historicity of Bodhidharma. See Broughton 1999; also Faure 1993.

²² In this respect, one's interest is peaked by the presence of the four diagrams on "Chan 禪" practice (walking, standing, sitting, and lying down) that are included in the *Xingming guizhi*, DZ 314, 9.554-555. In the chart on meditation practice, one is urged to engage in prolonged periods of seated meditation. In addition, Liaokong 了空 (fl. 1895), one of the teachers of Zhao Bichen (founder of the Qianfeng lineage), was a Chan monk who practiced *neidan*. Zhao Bichen is, in

tininess meditation becomes represented as the foundation for alchemical transformation, which also takes place in a seated meditation posture as represented in the *Neijing tu*. At the same time, there may be a polemical dimension—the Buddhist is placed beneath and in support of the Daoist. It is also plausible to interpret the “blue-eyed foreign monk holding up the heavens” as an illustration of the Zygomatic arch (cheekbones), and “Laozi’s eyebrows hanging down to earth” as the gaze becoming aware of internal aspects of Daoist subtle physiology.²³ Again, all of these layers may be occurring simultaneously in the diagram’s mapping of the Daoist body and Daoist religious praxis.

Just to the left of the blue-eyed foreign monk, there are two additional textual components, which read as follows:

Fazang says: “Violet eyes clarify the four great oceans; the white light pervades Mount Sumeru.”

Cishi says: “Between the eyebrows white light constantly emanates; this can liberate all sentient beings from the suffering of ceaseless reincarnation.”

Here Fazang 法藏 most likely refers to the historical Fazang (643-712),²⁴ the third patriarch of Huayan Buddhism who systematized its teaching, but preliminary research indicates that none of these lines are contained in Fazang’s extant works. The figure could also be, as Wang

turn, identified as an eleventh-generation member of the Wu-Liu sub-lineage of Longmen. See Xi 2004, especially 1-16. Taken together, this means that there were Daoist monks practicing “Chan” meditation, and Chan monks practicing “Daoist” internal alchemy in the Baiyun guan environs and nearby Buddhist sacred sites at a time roughly contemporaneous with the commissioning and engraving of the *Neijing tu*. The central importance of Bodhidharma and Chan again adds support for a Wu-Liu connection, as Liu Huayang, the co-founder, was a Chan monk. For additional insights on Daoism and the overall religio-cultural context of Beijing during the late imperial and early modern periods see Goossaert 2007.

²³ In terms of Western physiology, the figures also could be interpreted as the sphenoid bone and the pituitary gland, housed in the *sella turcica* portion of the sphenoid bone.

²⁴ With regard to “Fazang,” Rousselle (1933, 213) suggests that Fazang refers to Dharmagupta, but Wang points out that Dharmagupta’s Chinese name was Fami (Wang 1991-92, 148).

suggests, an allusion to the name of Amitābha before his attainment of Buddhahood (1991-92, 149). Cishi 慈氏 ("the merciful one") is the name of Maitreya, the future Buddha. It is this portion of the *Neijing tu* that I believe provides some of the clearest internal evidence for a Wu-Liu 伍柳 connection. The Wu-Liu branch of internal alchemy, generally identified as a sub-lineage of Longmen, traces itself to Wu Shouyang 伍守陽 (Chongxu 沖虛 [Infused Emptiness]; 1574-1644) and Liu Huayang 柳華陽 (Chuanlu 傳盧 [Transmitted Containment]; 1735-1799). Wu Shouyang identified himself as an eighth-generation Longmen adherent, and he may have studied directly under Wang Changyue 王常月 (Kunyang 崑陽 [Paradisical Yang]; 1622-1680), the key figure in the late imperial systematization of Longmen.²⁵ Liu Huayang, a Chan monk who converted from Confucianism, identified himself as the spiritual successor of Wu, possibly having received mystical instruction from him in 1780.²⁶ The name Wu-Liu was first used in 1897 in the *Wu-Liu xianzong* 伍柳仙宗 (Immortal Lineage of Wu and Liu),²⁷ a compilation that was edited by Deng Huiji 鄧徽績 (fl. 1897). That collection is thus roughly contemporaneous with the *Neijing tu*. Perhaps most relevant for present purposes, Liu Huayang continually cites the *Huayan jing* 華嚴經 (Skt.: *Avatamsaka Sūtra*; Flower Garland Sutra) throughout his writings. For example, in the *Huiming jing* 慧命經 (Scripture on Wisdom and Life-destiny), Liu explains that the eight diagrams illustrate the combined teachings of Daoist internal alchemy and the *Huayan jing* (ZW 131, 5.878, 5.881). So, within the emerging, late imperial Wu-Liu sub-lineage of Longmen, Fazang was a patriarch, and the *Neijing tu* in turn evidences some connection with that *neidan* system.

The content of the Fazang and Cishi couplets is intrinsically Buddhist, showing the degree to which "Buddhist" worldview was an inte-

²⁵ For information on Wu Shouyang's life see his *Tianxian zhengli zhilun zengzhu* 天仙正理直論增注 (JHL 77; ZW 127) and Min Yide's *Wu Chongxu lüshi zhuan* 伍沖虛律師傳 (JHL 7).

²⁶ For information on Liu Huayang's life, see *Huiming jing* preface (ZW 131).

²⁷ The collection includes Wu's *Tianxian zhengli* 天仙正理 (ZW 843) and *Xianfo hezong* 仙佛合宗 (ZW 843) as well as Liu's *Huiming jing* 慧命經 (ZW 131) and *Jinxian zhenglun* 金仙證論 (ZW 132). A popular translation of the latter two works appears in Wong 1998.

gral aspect of Daoist cultivation models in the late imperial period.²⁸ The textual and visual contours of the *Neijing tu* represent a commingling of the worldviews and goals of Buddhism and Daoism, perhaps most clearly expressed in the final goal of “prolonging longevity and [attaining] immortality and Buddhahood” at the highest point of the diagram. Both quotations speak of expansions of consciousness, extraordinary abilities, and liberation from suffering. That is, one encounters further attempts to inspire the observer to cultivate more perfected ontological conditions.

In addition to the main course of qi circulation along the spine, the diagram depicts smaller circulation routes. Some streams flow down from the upper mountains, while others move from the center of the head to the Descending Bridge (*jiangqiao* 降橋). The former relates to the Jade Nectar (*yujiang* 玉漿), Sweet Dew (*ganlu* 甘露) and Spirit Water (*shenshui* 神水) (see also Needham et al. 1983, 114; Eichman 2000a, 350). In the process of alchemical refinement, the perfect qi (*zhenqi* 真氣) rises up the Governing Vessel through the Three Gates, where it combines with the Spirit Water, a symbolic name for the saliva, to descend back to the central regions of the body (Needham et al. 1983, 77-78). Daoist cultivation methods increase the production of saliva, which is, in turn, swallowed and made to descend towards the lower elixir field. This involves dropping the tongue, represented in the *Neijing tu* as the Descending Bridge, from its normal position of touching the upper palate and drinking the Jade Dew. The saliva then passes through the “Twelve-Storied Tower” and the “Palace of the Sweet Spring and Cold Peak,” both names for the trachea.²⁹ The Jade Dew descends through the Scarlet Palace (*jiangong* 絳宮) to cleanse the heart, before it splashes and expands in the Ocean of Qi (*qihai* 氣海).

Then, of course, there are the Cowherd (*niulang* 牛郎) and the Weaving Maiden (*zhinü* 織女) (see Fig. 3). The Cowherd, corresponding to the Western star of Altair in the Aquila constellation, is shown standing in the heart region holding the Northern Dipper (Ursa Major). Next to him

²⁸ There is a similar tendency in such Daoist texts as the *Xingming guizhi* (ZW 314), *Huiming jing* (ZW 131), and *Xingming fajue mingzhi* (ZW 872).

²⁹ See the *Huangting jing*, DZ 332, 1.1b; eighth-century *Huangting waijing jing zhu*, DZ 263, 58.7a; and thirteenth-century *Jindan dacheng ji*, DZ 263, 10.4b.

is the following line from the lower Lü Dongbin poem: "Engraving the stone, the young lad holds a string of cash." The Weaving Maiden, corresponding to the Western star of Vega in the Lyra constellation, sits near the strand of trees working her loom. The textual component near her reads, "The Weaving Maiden transports and transfers." According to early Chinese mythology, the Cowherd and Weaving Maiden are lovers fated to meet only once a year. They are separated by the Sky River (Milky Way), over which a magpie bridge is believed to form on their annual meeting day (see Birrell 1999b, 165-67; Schafer 1977; Sun and Kistemaker 1997).³⁰ The figures suggest the meeting of two things that should be united, but which ordinarily remain separated. Based on their locations in the *Neijing tu*, and on one alchemically-symbolic level, the Cowherd represents the trigram Li-fire ☲, and is thus associated with the heart orb and with spirit. The Weaving Maiden represents the trigram Kan-water ☵, and is thus associated with the kidney orb and with vital essence. Like the magpie bridge, the Daoist practitioner must strive to unite these two physiological and energetic aspects. This is frequently referred to as the dual cultivation of innate nature (*xing* 性), associated with spirit and consciousness, and life-destiny (*ming* 命), associated with vital essence and physical vitality (see, e.g., *Xingming guizhi*, ZW 314; *Xingming fajue mingzhi*, ZW 872).³¹ In the context of Daoist *neidan* praxis, the Kan-water ☵ and Li-fire ☲ trigrams are frequently related to "Later Heaven" (*houtian* 後天) conditions, while Kun-earth ☷ and Qian-heaven ☰ trigrams are related to "Prior Heaven" (*xiantian* 先天) conditions. The aspiring Daoist adept is urged to complete the process of inversion (*diandao* 顛倒): replacing the yang-line — in Kan with a yin-line — to create the pure or perfect yin condition of Kun, and replacing the

³⁰ I leave open the possibility that there is an actual astronomical aspect to this section of the *Neijing tu*, wherein the adept connects with and ingests the astral qi of these stars. Whether or not this is the case, the diagram again reveals the practitioner of alchemical transformation as a cosmicized being.

³¹ Note that the *Xingming fajue mingzhi*, a text from a late imperial *neidan* context similar to the received *Neijing tu*, seems to contain a direct reference to the diagram. See ZW 872, 26.67. However, under the interpretation of the Chan Buddhist Liaokong, the two figures take on a Buddhist hue, becoming associated with an inconstant mind and desire. Liaokong reverses the symbolism, believing that the Cowherd relates to qi and the Weaving Maiden to the heart.

yin-line - - in Li with a yang-line — to create the pure or perfect yang condition of Qian (cf. *Xiuzhen tu*).³²

Like most esoteric alchemical symbolism, this process may be and has been interpreted in a variety of ways. First, based on the association of the kidneys with vital essence and the heart with intent, the process of inversion here involves directing intent toward the Mingmen area. This initiates an upward movement of vital essence (the yang line), which includes the generation, transformation and circulation of bodily fluids. Some of these fluids then descend into and through the heart region (the yin line), cleansing and purifying consciousness, before finally being absorbed into the lower elixir field, the Ocean of Qi. This, in turn, creates Qian-heaven, associated with the upper elixir field and original spirit, and Kun-earth, associated with the lower elixir field and original qi. Such an interpretation also adds an additional layer of meaning and practice: the Later Heaven condition of heart, characterized by emotional and intellectual turbidity, is Li-fire, while the Later Heaven condition of the kidneys, characterized by depletion of vital essence, is Kan-water. The Daoist adept transforms these ontological conditions into their original and perfected correlates: by conserving and transforming vital essence, original qi becomes abundant in the lower elixir field; by stilling and purifying the mind, original spirit becomes concentrated in the upper elixir field.

Finally, as Schipper observes, “the infant born out of the union of the weaver and the cowherd strings pieces of cash together that form the constellation of the Dipper—the star of fate, thus creating a new life for the body” (Schipper 1978, 356). The image of the Cowherd and Weaving Maiden thus reminds the viewer that prolonged Daoist cultivation leads to a transformed mode of being, to a different ontological condition, confirming yet again that “my fate is within me, not with the heavens” (*wo ming zai wo, bu zai tian* 我命在我、不在天) (*Baopuzi neipian* 抱朴子內篇, DZ 1185, 16.7a; *Xisheng jing* 西昇經, DZ 666, 3.6a) (see Schipper 1978, 365; see also Kohn 1991b, 250). The Northern Dipper (*beidou* 北斗) is often identified in the Daoist tradition as the primary determinant and influence on one’s “fate” or “life-destiny” (*ming* 命) (see Min and Li 1994, 369).

³² See, for example, the eleventh-century *Yuqing neilian dan jue* 玉清內煉丹訣 DZ 240, 1.10b; Li 1991, 310.

In the *Neijing tu*, this constellation is no longer located in the external cosmos. It has become formed and issues from the Daoist adept's own heart-mind. Through dedication to cultivation and alchemical transformation, the practitioner initiates a shift in ontological condition: from ordinary being, separated from the Dao and destined to dissipate, to Perfected, merged with the Dao and transcending the vicissitudes of mundane identity. One creates and inhabits a different cosmos, or at least the cosmos as completely integrated in, as and through one's own being.

Cultivational and Alchemical Contours

From the above analysis of the textual and visual contours of the *Neijing tu*, we have seen that the *Neijing tu* represents a sophisticated and multi-layered mapping of the Daoist body and Daoist religious praxis, specifically alchemical transformation as undertaken in the late imperial period and more than likely in the emerging Wu-Liu *neidan* sub-lineage of Longmen active in and around the environs of Baiyun guan during the late Qing dynasty (1644-1911). As charted in the present study, the *Neijing tu* provides illustrations for a wide variety of Daoist cultivation methods. Three in particular stand out: praxis-oriented applications of classical Chinese medical views of the body; visualization methods which draw their inspiration from the *Huangting jing* 黃庭經 (Scripture on the Yellow Court; DZ 331; 332) and which find clear historical precedents in early Shangqing 上清 (Highest Clarity) Daoism; and the alchemical technique known as the Waterwheel (*heche* 河車) or Microcosmic Orbit (*xiao zhoutian* 小周天). These three techniques form an interconnected system, wherein the adept's overall psychosomatic health is maintained and strengthened, wherein the adept's body becomes cosmized, and wherein the adept awakens the mystical body, the body-beyond-the-body (*shenwai shen* 身外身) or yang-spirit (*yangshen* 陽神), that is the culmination of alchemical transformation and the precondition for post-mortem transcendence. Each of the techniques thus complements and supplements the others.

The *Neijing tu* contains multiple layers of meaning, including various earlier Daoist visions of the body. Generally speaking, the foundational Daoist understanding of the human body in self-cultivation line-

ages parallels that of classical Chinese medicine.³³ The basic system incorporates yin-yang and Five Phase (*wuxing* 五行) cosmologies, with the Five Phases consisting of Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal, and Water. These basic cosmologies, reconciled into a consistent worldview by Zou Yan 鄒衍 (ca. 305-240 BCE), underlie some of the earliest of the received medical classics, the *Huangdi neijing* 黃帝內經 (Yellow Thearch's Inner Classics) (see Unschuld 1985; 2003). In these texts, the Five Phase system involves specific correspondences, some of which include direction, season, color, taste, grain, constellation, yin-orb (*zang* 藏/臟), emotion, sense organ, and sound (see, e.g., *Suwen*, ch. 5; Unschuld 2003, 99-124). In addition to a medical application of the now combined yin-yang and Five Phase cosmology, these medical texts provide foundational information on qi theory, theories of disease, and the meridian system.

The *Neijing tu*, in turn, draws attention to the classical Chinese medical view at the foundation of specific forms of Daoist cultivation, including various lineages of internal alchemy (see Robinet 1989b; 1995; Pregadio and Skar 2000; Komjathy 2007).³⁴ One obvious textual strata in the diagram that echoes the *Huangdi neijing* texts is the importance of the Du 督 (Governing) and Ren 任 (Conception) vessels, two of the Eight Extraordinary Vessels (*qijing bamai* 奇經八脈), which are mentioned by name in the upper section of the *Neijing tu* (see Fig. 4). Here is the *Neijing tu* as the "Diagram of Internal Pathways." Generally speaking, the Governing Vessel is the central meridian on the back of the body, while the

³³ Livia Kohn identifies three major Daoist views of the body, corresponding to three distinct methods and intellectual traditions within Daoism: (1) the body as an administrative system, rooted in the worldview of the *Daode jing*, and realized in quietistic and medically-oriented meditation; (2) the body as the residence of spirits or gods and associated with Shangqing visualization practices; and (3) the body as immortal universe, a vision developed under the influence of Buddhist insight meditation (Chn.: *guan* 觀; Skt.: *vipaśyanā*) (Kohn 1991a, 230). For additional insights on Daoist views of the body see Schipper 1978; 1993; Lévi 1989; Andersen 1995; Saso 1997; Komjathy 2007; for Chinese views in general see also Ames 1993; Kuriyama 1999. For relevant translations see Kohn 1993, 161-88.

³⁴ The study of the cross-pollination between Daoism and Chinese medicine is only just beginning, but see Unschuld 1985; Strickmann 2002. For some of the better theoretical discussions of Chinese medicine see Porkert 1974; Liu 1988; Maciocia 1989.

Conception Vessel is the central meridian on the front.³⁵ The former basically begins at the coccyx, the Weilü point or first of the Three Passes mentioned above, moves from the base of the spine up the middle of the back, around the crown-point, to the upper lip. The latter basically begins at the perineum, moves up the centerline of the front of the body, to the lower lip.³⁶ These vessels are most clearly depicted in the *Neijing tu* as the two pairs of five bands near the front of the head—the Governing Vessel contains the qi of the five yang-orbs (gall bladder, small intestine, stomach, large intestine, bladder), while the Conception Vessel contains the qi associated with the five yin-orbs (liver, heart, spleen, lung, kidney).³⁷

One also notices the presence of the five yin-orbs, combined with the gall bladder, in the textual material at the center of the *Neijing tu*. While only the traditional iconography of the liver is illustrated—the strand of trees corresponding to the Wood phase (see Fig. 3)—the most basic layer of meaning here refers to the health of each orb and thus the health of the entire organism,³⁸ with health being the smooth flow of qi throughout the body. Thus, we find the following passage in the *Suwen* where Qi Bo 岐伯 answers the Yellow Thearch's inquiries about the orbs:

³⁵ Eichman (2000a, 351) confuses the Governing Vessel with the Thrusting Vessel. The Thrusting Vessel, not the Governing Vessel, is the only meridian that traverses the center of the body from top to bottom. In Daoist cultivation, diverging here from Chinese medicine, this vessel ascends and descends through the core of the body from Huiyin (Meeting of Yin; CV-1), the perineum, to Baihui (Hundred Meetings; GV-20), the crown-point. See, e.g., *Xingming fajue mingzhi*, ZW 872, 26.94. Passages from the *Huangdi neijing* on the Thrusting Vessel may be found in *Suwen* chapter 60 and *Lingshu* chapters 33, 38 and 62, and 65. For a classical discussion of the system of the Eight Extraordinary Vessels see Nanjing chapters 27 and 28. Modern overviews of the system may be found in Larre 1997 as well as in Matsumoto and Birch 1986.

³⁶ For some classical references to the Governing Vessel and Conception Vessel see *Suwen* chapters 41 and 60 and *Lingshu* chapters 10 and 65.

³⁷ Although still developing, future research on Chinese views of embryogenesis may provide additional insights into the Daoist *neidan* emphasis on the Eight Extraordinary Vessels. If the Thrusting, Governing, and Conception vessels are the first meridians to develop, the Daoist adept would thus be accessing a more primordial moment in the differentiation of self.

³⁸ Recall the four Taiji diagrams mentioned above. See Figure 2.

Qi Bo replied, "The heart is the root of life and transformations of spirit (*shen* 神)...The lungs are the root of qi and the residence of the corporeal soul (*po* 魄)...The kidneys are the root of quiescence and storing and the residence of vital essence...The liver is the root of extremes and the residence of the ethereal soul (*hun* 魂)...The spleen and stomach, along with the large intestine, small intestine, Triple Warmer, and the bladder, are the root of storage and the residence of nutritive [qi] (*yingqi* 營氣). (DZ 1018, 9.15b-18b; cf. 18.8a-9b)³⁹

As expressed in the presence of the five yin-orbs in the *Neijing tu*, the Daoist adept must understand the specific functions of each orb and the various relationships among them.⁴⁰ The health of each orb and the harmonization of their respective functions is a necessary precondition for further alchemical work. If one takes the guidelines of the *Suwen* seriously, this involves a system wherein dietetics, seasonal attunement and cosmology are interwoven: one eats different types of foods and different flavors depending on one's constitutional tendencies, stage of life and the dominant seasonal influence (see, e.g., *Suwen*, chs. 1 and 2). It is difficult to know if this aspect of Chinese medicine and of Daoist cultivation is embedded in the *Neijing tu*, but the diagram clearly orients the adept towards the importance of the Five Phase system in general and the five yin-orbs in particular. One may say that this textual strata and level of training, rooted in a classical Chinese medical view, underlies the more obvious allusion to the *Huangting jing*, namely, the esoteric names of the orbs occurring in this section of the *Neijing tu*.

Before moving from this discussion of praxis-based applications of classical Chinese medicine to the potential visualization practices expressed in the diagram, a few additional points deserve reflection. In the previous section on textual and visual contours, I have emphasized that

³⁹ In Chinese medicine, the Triple Warmer (*sanjiao* 三焦) is one of the six yang-orbs (*liufu* 六腑). It is paired with the pericardium (*xinbao* 心包), which was added to the five yin-orbs (*wuzang* 五臟) in order to create parallelism. For an attempt to chart its significance in Daoist alchemy in general and Quanzhen in particular see Komjathy 2007, ch. 4.

⁴⁰ For some contemporary discussions see Maciocia 1989 and Ross 1994.

the *Neijing tu* draws the attention of the viewer, and of the aspiring adept utilizing it as an aid to his or her training, to specific locations in the body. One must, of course, know the importance of such locations in Daoist alchemical practice to identify them in a diagram that lacks flesh, in a diagram of the subtle body and inner realms. The associations of these points in Daoist alchemical praxis has already been partially discussed above and receives clarification below, but it is also possible to chart them according their medical function in contemporary Chinese medicine. While potentially anachronistic in terms of the context in which the diagram originated, these comments are meant to show that there are clear psychosomatic effects and therapeutic benefits. Some of the relevant corporeal regions are as follows: perineum (yin-yang treadmill; Huiyin 會陰 [Meeting of Yin]; CV-1), coccyx (lower temple/pass; Weilü [Tailbone Gate]; GV-1), lower back (flames in the spine; Mingmen 命門 [Gate of Life]; GV-4), mid-spine (middle temple/pass; Jiaji 夾脊 [lit., "Beside-the-Spine"; Narrow Ridge]; GV-6), occiput (upper temple/pass; Yuzhen 玉真 [Jade Pillow]; BL-9 and/or Naohu 腦戶 [Brain Door]; GV-17), crown-point (second highest peak; Baihui 百會 [Hundred Meetings]; GV-20), upper lip (end of upper bands; Yinjiao 陰交 [Gum Intersection]; GV-28), and lower lip (end of lower bands; Chengjiang 承漿 [Fluid Receptacle]; CV-24) (see also *Xingming guizhi*, ZW 314, 9.518; *Xingming fajue mingzhi*, ZW 872, 26.17).⁴¹ As this list indicates, all of these points are on the Governing Vessel (GV) and Conception Vessel (CV), which are considered "extra" meridians in contemporary Chinese medicine, meaning that they are not part of the standard twelve meridians associated with the yin-orbs and yang-orbs. One understanding of the so-called Eight Extraordinary Vessels is that they store "overflow" qi and are empty or inactive in most people (see Larre 1997; Matsumoto and Birch 1986).

In addition to being "reservoirs" of qi, they are related to vital essence, one's core vitality, and "protective qi" (*weiqi* 衛氣), the qi that protects one from exterior pathogenic influences. The activation of these meridians in Daoist alchemical praxis thus stabilizes one's overall health and increases one's resiliency to disease. These forms of Daoist cultivation also increase the levels of qi in the body, which fill the Eight Ex-

⁴¹ For more on the function of these various points in contemporary Chinese medicine see Ellis et al. 1989; Deadman et al. 2001.

traordinary Vessels. The ordinary person has twelve active meridians and eight latent meridians; the Daoist alchemist has twenty active meridians, including those associated with “psychic” abilities. In addition, although it is beyond the scope of the present study to provide a complete explanation, the above “acupoints” or energetic locations in the body have specific functional/therapeutic associations in contemporary Chinese medicine. Taken together, they connect the Governing, Conception and Thrusting vessels; harmonize the entire orb-meridian system; strengthen the kidneys and vital essence; nourish the marrow, spine and brain; strengthen the digestive system; and calm the heart and spirit. In short, by activating and concentrating on these locations, Daoist adepts strengthen their overall psychosomatic wellness and awaken latent energetic layers of their being.

As expressed in the *Neijing tu*, Daoist religious praxis also involves visualization methods which draw their inspiration from the *Huangting jing* 黃庭經 (Scripture on the Yellow Court; DZ 331; 332) and which find clear historical precedents in early Shangqing 上清 (Highest Clarity) Daoism, specifically visualizing the five yin-orbs in terms of *wuxing* color and light associations.⁴² As mentioned, an additional layer of the *Neijing tu*’s title is the “Diagram of Inner Luminosities”; that is, the diagram may be read/employed as an aid for visualizing/activating/lodging the inner body gods (see Kroll 1996). In the textual component near the heart region (see Fig. 3), the various orbs are identified according to the esoteric names of their specific spirits as found in the *Huangting neijing jing* (DZ 331, 3a). This section of the *Neijing tu* reads as follows:

The spirit of the heart is [called] Elixir Origin, given name

Guarding the Numen.

The spirit of the lungs is [called] Brilliant Splendor, given name

⁴² Robinet (1993) provides information on the place of the *Huangting jing* in Shangqing Daoism (see also Robinet 1984; 2000). Schipper 1975 provides a critical edition with an index, while Homann 1971 gives a preliminary analysis of the *Neijing jing*. Partial translations appear in Kohn 1993; Kroll 1996. A complete translation appears in Huang 1990. Michael Saso (1995) has also published a “translation,” but the reader is forewarned that many of the translated passages bear little resemblance to the original text. For insights on earlier Shangqing visualization practices see especially Robinet 1989a; 1993, ch. 2.

Emptiness Complete.
 The spirit of the liver is [called] Dragon Mist, given name
 Containing Illumination.
 The spirit of the kidneys is [called] Mysterious Obscurity,
 given name Nourishing the Child.
 The spirit of the spleen is [called] Continuously Existing, given
 name Ethereal Soul Pavilion.
 The spirit of the gall bladder is [called] Dragon Glory, given
 name Majestic Illumination.⁴³

Comparing the two passages, the *Neijing tu* has a number of discrepancies with the standard, classical list. In addition to the use of *zi* 自 ("personal [name]") instead of *zi* 字 ("style name"), the diagram's text inverts the first name for the lungs: the *Huangting jing* reading *haohua* 皓華 ("Splendid Brilliance"), and the *Neijing tu* reading *huahao* 華皓 ("Brilliant Splendor"). More significantly, the *Neijing tu* substitutes *neng* 能 ("able to") for *long* 龍 ("dragon") in the names of the liver and gall bladder, and the first name for the liver spirit is incorrect. In the diagram, it reads *nengyao* 能曜 ("Capable Glory") instead of *longyan* 龍煙 ("Dragon Mist"), thus reproducing the name for the spirit of the gall bladder from the *Huangting jing*.

The associations of the orbs with light and spiritual presences parallel those documented in the *Huangting jing* texts, and the section of the *Huangting neijing jing* in which the above esoteric names appear concludes as follows: "The spirits of the six yang-orbs and five yin-orbs are the vital essences of the body....By visualizing (*cun* 存) them day and night,⁴⁴ you will naturally attain longevity" (DZ 331, 3b; see also *Huangting neijing fuzang liufu buxie tu*, DZ 432).

⁴³ I have put the orbs in their order of occurrence in the *Huangting neijing jing* even though the diagram's text does not follow a recognizable pattern. I have also corrected the names in my translation in Figure 3. I leave open the question of whether or not the efficacy of the technique is affected by utilizing incorrect names.

⁴⁴ Or "by preserving them day and night." In the context of Shangqing practices, *cun* 存 is usually translated "to visualize." However, I leave open the possibility that *cun* should be taken in its more standard sense of "to preserve." That is, the *Huangting jing* may be more about stabilizing an abode for the various orb

Reading Daoist religious praxis solely in terms of the diagram, the most that one can reasonably say is the adept must know the esoteric names of the orbs and their related spirits, and he or she must practice an inner observation (*neiguan* 內觀) and/or visualization (*cunxiang* 存想) technique in which colors and numinous presences are central. Here one must know the following *wuxing* correspondences: Wood - liver (gall bladder) - azure - dragon - east; Fire - heart - red - vermilion bird - south; Earth - spleen - yellow - — - center; Metal - lungs - white - tiger - west; and Water - kidneys - black - north - Mysterious Warrior (snake-turtle). Based on the above passage and the corresponding correlative cosmological associations, the Daoist adept brings his or her awareness to the heart, recalls the esoteric names *danyuan* and *shouling*, and visualizes the heart as an orb of red light. Next, the adept brings his awareness to the lungs, recalls the esoteric names *haohua* and *xucheng*, and visualizes the lungs as an orb of white light. This is followed by the same process for the liver, kidneys, and spleen. Finally, the adept brings his awareness to the gall bladder, recalls the esoteric names *longyao* and *weiming*, and visualizes the gall bladder as an orb of azure light.⁴⁵ This proposed reconstruction of the visualization technique is substantiated by the following additional passage from the *Huangting jing*:

[The youth (*tongzi* 童子) of the lungs wears] white brocade robes with sashes of yellow clouds...[The youth of the heart wears] flowing cinnabar brocade robes with a jade shawl, gold bells and vermilion sashes...[The youth of the liver wears] azure brocade robes with a skirt of jade bells...[The youth of the kidneys wears] black brocade, cloud robes with dancing dragon banners...[The youth of the spleen wears] yellow brocade, jade robes with a tiger-emblem sash...[The youth of the

spirits, about becoming aware of and observing these, than about imagining something to be the case.

⁴⁵ The gall bladder is the yang-orb paired with the liver, and thus associated with the Wood phase. In the context of the *Huangting jing*, it is unclear why the gall bladder is singled out. Here I would also mention that *dan* 丹 in the name of the heart and *xuan* 玄 in the kidneys suggest a cinnabar-red color in the former and deep blue color in the latter.

gall bladder wears] nine-colored brocade robes with a green
flower skirt and a gold belt (DZ 331, 3b-6a).⁴⁶

That is, the *wuxing* color associations are mentioned in the section of the *Huangting jing* that directly follows the passage listing the esoteric names of the orb spirits. If the middle section of the *Neijing tu* is an encrypted and abridged reminder for the Daoist adept utilizing the *Huangting jing* as a visualization manual, then the technique being employed is even more complex than my outline suggests. The *wuxing* colors are primary, but there are also secondary colors as well as "anthropomorphic" images for the orb spirits.⁴⁷ The adept encounters and becomes inhabited by body gods with very specific visual appearances, including robes with corresponding colors and symbols.⁴⁸

The praxis-oriented applications of classical Chinese medical views of the body and the visualization of the five yin-orbs based on their esoteric names in the *Huangting jing* and corresponding *wuxing* associations are integrated into a comprehensive and interconnected system of Daoist cultivation and alchemical transformation in the *Neijing tu*. In this respect, the diagram also clearly illustrates the *neidan* technique known as the Waterwheel (*heche* 河車) or Microcosmic Orbit practice (*xiao zhoutian* 小周天; lit., "Smaller Celestial Cycle").⁴⁹ Generally speaking, this practice

⁴⁶ This is a tentative translation, as the various references to jade and clouds may be to "patterns" in the clothes, "colors" of the clothes, or actual jade and clouds. I have attempted to stay as close to the original as possible.

⁴⁷ In terms of continuities in Daoism in general and *neidan* lineages in particular, it is noteworthy that these esoteric names of the orb spirits appear in, for example, the *Xiuzhen taiji hunyuan zhixuan tu* 修真太極混元指玄圖, DZ 150, 7a (see Baryosher-Chemouny 1996) and the *Xingming guizhi*, ZW 314, 9.529.

⁴⁸ Beyond this narrow and relatively conservative reading of the diagram, one finds similar visualization methods in texts which slightly predate or which are contemporaneous with the *Neijing tu*. See, e.g., the seventeenth-century *Xingming guizhi*, ZW 314, 9.516, 9.519; *Xingming fajue mingzhi*, ZW 872, 26.101, 26.119. Cf. *Jindan dacheng ji*, DZ 263, 10.7a; *Dadan zhizhi*, DZ 244, 1.4b, 2.1a, *passim*.

⁴⁹ Wang (1991-92, 152), following Needham et al. (1983, 72-80; 114-16), identifies the Smaller Celestial Cycle (*xiao zhoutian* 小周天) with the circulation of the perfect qi between the heart (the Cowherd) and the kidneys (Needham's "reins;" the Weaving Maiden), while the Larger Celestial Cycle (*da zhoutian* 大周天) involves the spinal column. In contrast, in more contemporary practices the Micro-

involves circulating qi up the Governing Vessel and down the Conception Vessel in a continuous cycle.⁵⁰ The centrality of this alchemical technique in the *Neijing tu* is substantiated by various diagrammatic contours: the Three Passes, including the importance of the perineum area (yin-yang treadmill); the two sets of five-bands, identified in the map as the Du (Governing) and Ren (Conception) vessels; the heart-region, through which the Sweet Dew and qi descend; and the lower elixir field, where the perfect qi becomes stored. In addition, the colored dimensions of the painting increase one's awareness of this aesthetic-practical depiction and the corresponding energetic movement through the body.

As expressed in the *Neijing tu* and other late imperial Daoist sources,⁵¹ the Microcosmic Orbit practice was a central component of late imperial Daoist *neidan* praxis. In one version of this cultivation method, the Daoist practitioner uses the intent (*yi* 意) to combine vital essence with qi and circulate it up the Governing Vessel and down the Concep-

cosmic Orbit focuses specifically on the Governing and Conception vessels, while the Macrocosmic Orbit involves circulating qi through all of the Eight Extraordinary Vessels. See, e.g., *Xingming fajue mingzhi*, ZW 872.

⁵⁰ The history of the so-called Microcosmic Orbit technique is currently known. There are clear historical precedents in Song-Jin *neidan* lineages, where the practice is usually referred to as the Waterwheel (*heche* 河車) and sometimes as the Celestial Cycle (*zhoutian* 周天). However, as far as my reading goes, most of those methods involve circulating vital essence and qi up the spine, thus corresponding to the practice of "reverting vital essence to restore the brain" (*huanjing bunao* 還精補腦). That is, they do not utilize the Conception and Governing vessels. See, e.g., the tenth-century *Chuandao ji* which has a chapter entitled "Heche" (DZ 263, 15.19b-23b). Some related diagrams may be found in the *Dadan zhizhi*, DZ 244; *Huangdi bashiyi nanjing zuantu jujie*, DZ 1024, 4a. See also the *Xiuzhen tu* and the thirteenth-century diagram entitled the "Yixue lei" 醫學類 (Section on Medical Learning), which is preserved in the fifteenth-century *Shilin guangji* 事林光記 (Needham et al. 1983, 112).

⁵¹ See, e.g., *Xingming guizhi*, ZW 314, 9.518-19; *Huiming jing*, ZW 131, 5.879-890; *Xingming fajue mingzhi*, ZW 872, 26.28, 26.94. On these texts see Wilhelm 1962; Lu 1973; Despeux 1979; Needham et al. 1983, Wong 1998; Darga 1999. A more thorough comparison between the *Neijing tu* and contemporaneous texts might clarify its relationship to such late imperial lineages as Longmen and Wu-Liu. It is also noteworthy that these texts are widely circulated among contemporary Quanzhen monastics. Author's field observations.

tion Vessel in a continual cycle. The *Neijing tu* draws attention to this particular cultivation method through the presence of not only the above-mentioned vessels but also the three temples or huts along the spinal column. These are the Three Passes (*sanguan* 三關) through which it is difficult for the qi to pass. The passes, from lower to middle to upper, are as follows: Weilü 尾閭 (Tailbone Gate; coccyx), Jiaji 夾脊 (Narrow Ridge; literally, "beside-the-spine"; mid-spine), and Yuzhen 玉枕 (Jade Pillow; occiput). In the Microcosmic Orbit practice, particular attention is given to these three locations in order to open the vessels and ensure the efficacious movement of vital essence and qi through the body. In one version of the practice, the adept uses the intent to consecutively open Huiyin (perineum), Weilü (coccyx), Mingmen (between kidneys), Jiaji (mid-spine), Yuzhen (occiput), Baihui (crown-point), Shenguan 神關 (Spirit Pass; third-eye), and Yinjiao 陰交 (Gum Intersection; cleft of upper lip).

Next one uses the tongue to gather saliva and swallow it down through the Twelve-storied Tower and Scarlet Palace, before it joins with the perfect qi in the lower elixir field. Each of these positions in turn corresponds to one of the twelve branches (*dizhi* 地支), with the perineum being *zi* 子 (north; midnight; winter solstice) and the crown-point being *wu* 午 (south; noon; summer solstice) (see *Xingming fajue mingzhi*, ZW 872, 26.17, 26.94). Recalling the two sets of five bands in the *Neijing tu*, the Microcosmic Orbit practice leads to the activation and maintenance of the other meridians and their related orbs. That is, circulating qi through the Governing and Conception vessels harmonizes the entire subtle body. The activation of and/or encounter with this subtle body is thus a central dimension of Daoist *neidan* praxis as documented in the *Neijing tu* and as expressed in late imperial Daoism. In addition, if the Daoist adept is also incorporating the above-mentioned *wuxing* correspondences and visualization techniques, as the *Neijing tu* seems to indicate, then his or her practice literally embodies a transformed condition, a transforming process. Astral effulgences and various subtle realities are introduced into, merged with, and circulated through his or her very being.

Reorientations

In the previous installment of the present article, which covered the historical and terminological contours of the *Neijing tu*, I emphasized its origins in the Longmen monastic community of Baiyun guan during the late Qing dynasty (1644-1911). These historical details have now been clarified based on internal textual evidence. The intermingling of Chan Buddhist and Daoist *neidan* concerns, specifically the reference to Fazang, indicates a potential connection with the emerging Wu-Liu sub-lineage of Longmen. In addition, analysis of influential late-imperial Daoist texts, including works that were roughly contemporaneous with the *Neijing tu* and that also circulated within the Longmen monastic community, indicates strong parallels. Of particular note in this respect is the strong emphasis that Liu Huayang, one of the nominal founders of the Wu-Liu lineage, places on the *Huayan jing* and the Microcosmic Orbit practice in his *Huiming jing*.

From the discussion of the textual and visual contours, as well as the cultivational and alchemical contours, it has become clear that the *Neijing tu* represents a detailed and multilayered mapping of the Daoist body and Daoist religious praxis. On the one hand, it parallels various earlier *neidan* lineages and related diagrams of Daoist bodies. On the other hand, the *Neijing tu* seems to be a unique synthesis. It expresses a vision of the Daoist body as actualized through alchemical praxis and transformation. At the core of this vision is an emphasis on self-cultivation: the body contains fields to be tended, seeds to be sown, and grain to be gathered. That grain contains the universe, a universe which is simultaneously cosmos, world, landscape, community, self. It is a universe actualized through *neidan* praxis, which according to the *Neijing tu* involves the conservation and transformation of vital essence, production and ingestion of saliva, visualization of the inner orbs, and activation of the Daoist “alchemical” or “mystical body” (see Komjathy 2007). This is the yang-spirit or the body-beyond-the-body that is the precondition for post-mortem survival. It is a “mystical body” because one’s body becomes cosmicized, rarified and possibly divinized. One’s very physiology becomes experienced as the numinous presence of the Dao made manifest and *embodied*. It is also “mystical” because there are non-spatial and subtle dimensions that require actualization. Based on the *Neijing tu*,

it is unclear if the ultimate goal of religious praxis expressed in its contours is unification with and absorption into the Dao, enlightenment conceived of as the emergence of divine radiance, or the formation of a yang-spirit that will transcend the death of the physical body. Placed in the context of similar systems of internal alchemy, especially those of the late imperial period, it is perhaps the latter: a yang-spirit which exits through the crown-point upon the death of the physical body, expressed as the pearl of white light above the head in the *Neijing tu*.

To conclude, one may recall the wonder expressed by Liu Chengyin when he first encountered this diagram in the studio of Gao Songshan.

I examined [the diagram] for a long time and realized that my comprehension was growing. I began to realize that exhalation and inhalation as well as expelling and ingesting of the human body are the waxing and waning as well as the ebb and flow of the cosmos. If you can divine and gain insight into this, you will have progressed more than halfway on your inquiry into the great Way of the Golden Elixir.

According to Liu, Daoists viewing this map see their own possibility for psychosomatic transformation reflected in its lines and images, in its mapping of the Daoist body and Daoist religious practice. Simultaneously, the map is not the territory (see Smith 1993). The purpose of a map is to familiarize the traveler with the landscape, and the map is merely a preliminary stage in developing a deeper awareness of and relationship with a particular region, to develop the appropriate orientation. Until one becomes so familiar with, so oriented towards, the landscape that one may burn the map as kindling for a mountain fire, the map has failed to serve its purpose. As a map of the Daoist body, the *Neijing tu* urges aspiring Daoist adepts to dedicate themselves to alchemical transformation, to religious praxis that will result in the emergence of numinous presences and a subtle body. This is the Daoist body not as map but as actuality.

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